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at a royal homestead, and was led by a nominee of the king, usually a prince or chief. Other royal homesteads, called 'heads', were in charge of princes and were the foci of allegiance of groups of chiefdoms within the kingdom.

Thus every man owed allegiance in several places. He had obligations to his agnatic lineage, and in particular to that segment of the lineage within the chiefdom to which he belonged. Local matters, questions arising over land and cattle, and quarrels between neighbours, were settled by discussion between agnates or by reference to the lieutenant appointed by the chief to look after the district. Every man was also a member of a division of his chiefdom, and hunted wild beasts with his fellows in the division. He was a member of his chiefdom as against other chiefdoms, and looked to his chief for assistance in his affairs, even as the chief relied on the support of his people in his own struggles with other chiefs. In the nation, every man belonged to a regiment, fought and danced alongside his regimental age-mates drawn from every chiefdom, and was expected to support the prince who commanded the regiment. Finally he was a member of a 'head' and within his regiment was grouped together with others from the same head. A man might change his chiefdom, but his allegiance to regiment and head were fixed.[5]

The Ngoni State was founded in the 1820's by men and women, perhaps a thousand in number, who had grown up in a social system of this kind. Certain parts of the system were dropped, others were developed. In effect, the system was simplified and adapted to the life of migrant brigandage which the Ngoni enjoyed for some seventy years. The old alignment of agnatic lineages disappeared, for the great majority of Ngoni joined the system by capture, not by birth. In its place a quasi-agnatic residential system was evolved, in which men and women bore allegiance not to their own agnatic seniors but to their lord or captor. This system was, however, tied in with an arrangement of royal homesteads which in itself was a development of the division of polygynous households into great, left- and right-hand 'houses'. There were no chiefdoms within the nation, for the nation began, as it were, as a *tabula rasa* without significant relics of earlier chiefly alignments. The age-set system remained the basis of military organization, but there were no royal or chiefly commanders appointed over regiments and there were no regimental barracks. Instead the bulk of the population lived in large villages which resembled the former royal homesteads and military barracks but in which men

[5] Based on Bryant, *Olden time*, and Gluckman, 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

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his leadership, or who may have been part of his following before the migration began.[10]

The people led by Zwangendaba called themselves Ngoni, a name derived from Nguni, a term of salutation (*isithakazelo*) common to many agnatic clans in Natal. The tribes with whom the Ngoni fought referred to them by a wide variety of names and it is under these that they appear in the early literature. They were known as Angoni, Amapundi, Bangoni, Batuta, Bazowa, Bunga, Landeens, Landims, Machendi, Mafiti, Mafitte, Magwagwara, Makwangara,

TABLE I. LEADERS OF GROUPS IN THE 1820's

Shaka	Effective head of the Mthethwa kingdom and founder of the Zulu empire.
Zwide	Ndandwe king, defeated by Shaka.
Soshangane	A classificatory younger brother of Zwide.
Zwangendaba	Independent minor chief, sometime ally of Zwide.
Mzilikazi	Originally independent leader who became one of Shaka's generals and later fled from him.
Nxaba	Independent minor chief who fled from Shaka.

Mangone, Mangwangwara, Manitu, Maviti, Mavitu, Mazite, Mazitu, Mbunga, Mchecherere, Rugaruga, Sinyama, Waangwe, Wajoja, Wamachonde, Wamachote, Wangoni, Wapoma, Watuta, Zulu and Zulu Kaffirs.[11] Some of these names they shared with other tribes and bands of brigands.

4. *The residential system*

The Nguni men and women who made up the core of Zwangendaba's following were grouped together in agnatic lineages and in age-sets. Their captives were absorbed into this social structure and in the process the structure was inevitably altered to conform to the peculiar features of Ngoni life. The heads of the various distinct lineages under Zwangendaba, or at least some of them, became known as *regional governors*[12] and their lineages became

[10] Bryant, *Olden times*, pp. 158-71, 204-16; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 7-11.
[11] See Tew, *Lela Njuzu*, p. 93.
[12] *Mukuluzana*, pl. *akuluzana*. cf. Zulu, *umnumzana*, village headman; also Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

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segments in what we shall term the Ngoni residential system. The constituent segments of their lineages formed the nuclei of minor segments of the residential system. Using the adjectives 'superior' and 'inferior' to indicate merely relative position, we may say that each Nguni agnatic lineage segment was in general contained within superior segments of greater span and at the same time contained within itself smaller but similar inferior units. This formation is characteristic of all lineage systems, as is well known. The segments of the residential system were arranged in the same way but whereas there were several distinct agnatic lineages, or parts of such lineages, under the political leadership of Zwangendaba, in the residential system all, or nearly all, of these distinct lineages were included within the largest residential segment. In other words, the largest segment of the residential system contained almost the whole of Zwangendaba's following, his regional governors, his and their captives and other followers, as well as his own agnatic kinsmen. Again, whereas the various lineage segments contained only the agnatic relatives of the head of the segment, each segment in the residential system included many captives, men, women and children, as well as an agnatic core.

The segments or units of the residential system were enduring social groups which, by analogy with the usual terminology for lineage systems, we shall call primal segments.[13] The segment of highest order was the State itself (or the greater portion thereof), consisting in 1898 of some 75,000 people, while many of the lowest order segments contained only half a dozen people. Each member of a segment belonged not only to that segment but also to all the superior segments of which it was a part.

We shall refer to the man in charge of, or the founder of, a segment as a lord (*mfumu*) and to the members of his segment as his dependants. Every man was potentially a lord, and every lord except the Paramount Chief, Zwangendaba, was a dependant of some other lord higher in the hierarchy. A lord was politically responsible for all the men and women in his segment. He was related agnatically to some of the men in his segment and towards his captives he stood in a quasi-agnatic relationship in that, although he had the same rights and duties towards them as if he had been their father, it was nevertheless possible, and indeed quite usual, for his captives to marry one another and for him to marry one of his woman captives. In the absence of true agnatic descendants a lord was sometimes succeeded by a quasi-related dependant.

[13] *Cigaŵa*, pl. *zigaŵa*, from *ku-gaŵa*, to divide. cf. Nsenga, *ku-yaŵa*, to divide, and Zulu, *isi-gaba*, section or portion divided off from the whole.

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Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*mwavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*akanikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Ndunas*, pl. *ndunas*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 47n, 47a, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

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173 621 631 together in a cluster of huts, and several clusters together formed a division, inhabited by members of a segment of greater span. Larger segments corresponded to complete villages and the largest segments of all contained many separate villages. The same general pattern of settlement was repeated at successive halting places on the migration, but as a segment grew in size by natural increase and by the addition of more captives, so its settlement grew from a cluster to a division and from a single village to a group of villages. In a large segment with many villages, the constituent inferior segments remained under the political leadership of the lord of the large segment but achieved a certain amount of autonomy. On many occasions the interests of one or more inferior segments diverged from those of the rest of the large segment, from what we shall term the *residue* of the large segment. This divergence of interest sometimes led to the disappearance of the large segment as an effective social unit and, at the highest level in the residential system, to splits in the State itself.

173 595 613 621 631 The first bevy of wives formed by a lord ranked senior to other bevies, and the wife in charge was the lord's great wife. Her eldest son was his main heir and the eldest son of each bevy leader was heir in its own segment. Yet sons, whether heirs or not, were able to establish segments of their own for their wives when they married and these segments remained as distinct social groups when an heir succeeded. Thus a man could be lord of a segment founded by his father and at the same time lord of a smaller segment, within the first, which he had founded himself. This arrangement was of fundamental importance in the working of the residential system, particularly in the formation of those large and politically dominant segments with which we are mainly concerned in this book, and still finds expression in the new villages founded by each reigning county chief. When the Paramount Chief, or one of his sons, founded a segment for a bevy of queens, the new segment was of village size and many men were called by the chief from existing segments to join the new one. As the segment grew in size, minor segments within it broke out to form separate villages of their own and the parent village became the headquarters of the group of villages and of the segment they formed. The headquarters of all large dispersed segments endured as social groups, as villages, despite the continual throwing off of more and more satellites. Thus the number of large villages, each the headquarters of a segment founded for a bevy of a reigning chief, increased as time went on. These villages remain to-day, and Ngoni history is largely the story of the formation and development of the segments associated with them.

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5. *Under Zwangendaba's leadership*

When the Ngoni migration began, the greater portion of Zwangendaba's followers belonged to the primal segment founded for the great wife of Hlatshwayo, father of Zwangendaba. When the migration began there were perhaps a thousand people in this segment (this figure is largely guesswork). For convenience of reference we shall refer to the various historically significant segments by numbers. Thus segment 1, with the proper name of Elangeni, is that of Hlatshwayo's great wife. The structural relationship of seventeen numbered segments to each other and to the royal genealogy is shown in Diagram 1. A list of their proper names and of the names of the lords and ladies associated with them, is given in Table II, together with information on three segments superior to segment 1 and on three other segments which cannot be placed on Diagram 1 for lack of information.

This diagram and the accompanying table are skeletons, showing only those few men and women who were heads of major groups which, partly fortuitously, have endured to the present day and are now large chiefdoms. There were many more queens than the ten shown on the diagram and very many more sons of chiefs, regional governors, lieutenants and other less exalted men and women all of whom were in charge of named segments, many of which still survive, forming part of a single system. The same principles of organization applied at all levels in the residential system. Here we have set out the names and positions of only the major limbs of the tree of State. We must not forget that the minor branches and little twigs were part of the same growing whole.

Segment 1 included the greater portion of the State, but it is clear from Elmslie and Fraser, and made explicit by Read, that the headquarters of several superior segments were also present on the march north. Read states that villages belonging to nine generations of chiefs were still in existence in northern Nyasaland in 1936. There is no direct evidence from Fort Jameson, for there are no headquarters of ancient royal segments there, but there are several villages belonging to the lieutenants of segments founded by Zwangendaba's father. I have therefore included in Table II the three superior segments whose names are given by Chibambo.[17] It is probable that Zwangendaba had succeeded to the position of

[Text continues on page 15]

[17] Read, 'Tradition', pp. 463*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 14.

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Mpezeni

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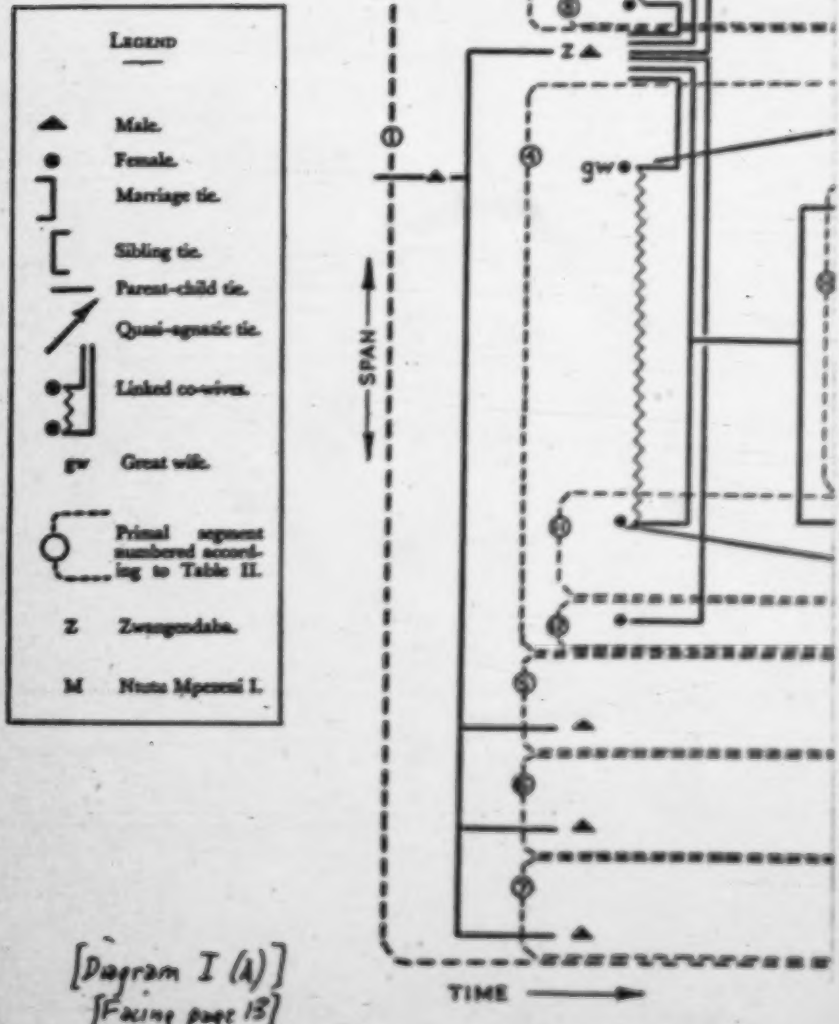
DIAGRAM I. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM



[Diagram I (1)]
[Facing page 13]

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DIAGRAM 1. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM
SEGMENTS 1–17

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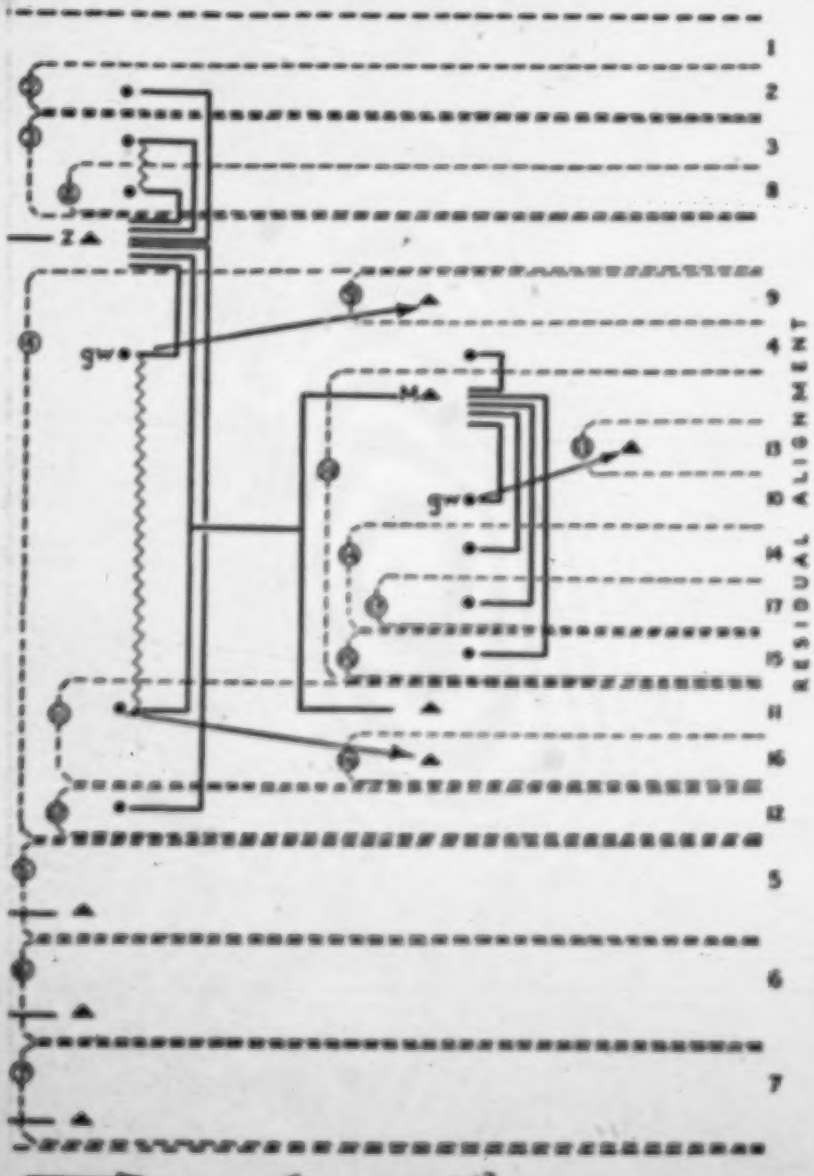

[Diagram I (8)]
[Facing page 13]

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TABLE II. RESIDENTIAL SEGMENTS OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

Segment		Lady's husband (in brackets when segment was not the first founded by him)	Lady	Lady's heir
Number	Proper name			
(c)	Enhlakuni	Lonyanda	?	Magaleta
(c)	Enhlekiseni	Magaleta	?	Maganguta
(c)	Hoho	Maganguta	?	Hlanhwayo
1	Elangeni	Hlanhwayo	Mqamache nsima	Zwangendaba
2	Emciweni	(Zwangendaba)	Mhambose	Mpevembe *or* ? Ndindane
3	Ekwendeni	(Zwangendaba)	Muzene nsima, *later* Cutu nsima	Mwambera Mtwalo
4	Mzenguleni	(Zwangendaba)	Luziwaŵa Lompetu nsumalo	Mpezeni (son of her linked co-wife)
5	Kunyeni	Lomagela	?	Magwambane
6	Nyangweni	Somfula	?	Mkonyeni(e)
7	Engwenyameni (d)	Ntaheni	?	Ngodoyi
8	Ezigodhlweni *or* Emchakachakeni	(Zwangendaba)	Muzene nsima	Mwambera
9	Cikenkheni	Mzukwa mayoga	?	?
10	Loangeni	Ntutu Mpezeni I	Lupeko pakati	Nángu
11	Dingeni	(Zwangendaba)	Soseia nsumalo	Nayovhu (second son)
12	Mkuzhweni *or* ? Emangeni	(Zwangendaba)	Zinkhave mahlangase	Mlehelo (c)
13	Tembweni	Kapatamoyo	?	?
14	Fumbeni	(Mpezeni I)	Mfuwa nako	Nzermane
15	Chimpinga	(Mpezeni I)	Kukuya Kapili nsala	Sayili
16	Fulaweni	Mashambulani (b)	?	?
17	Nghyebweni	(Mpezeni I)	Fainko	Maguya
18(c)	Emweyeyeni *or* Mvelekeni *or* ? Mvewani	Zwangendaba	Luziwaŵa nsumalo	——
19(c)	Emulelini	(Zwangendaba)	Mcibezana madhlopa	?
20(c)	Emnaluchweni	Mgayi	?	?

[Notes to table are on page 15. Analyst]

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lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration.

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mveleleni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary bevies of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Emciweni)[18] for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emzizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18.

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then rank d as if they had been borne by her linked senior.[19] Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent

[18] Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 58, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

[19] See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 6, 34, 94.

Notes

(a) Ancestor of present Chief Mkonyeni, Fort Manning Division.
(b) Ancestor of former Chief Mkonyeni and present Chief Tsteka, Fort Jameson District.
(c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Mshoke, who belongs to segment 11.
(d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
(e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

[see table on page 14—Analyst]

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mention Ntaboni's group as reaching Victoria Nyanza, and it may be that he has merely attributed this exploit to the wrong group. Such an interpretation would be in accord with the accounts of Elmslie, Young, Chibambo and Rangeley, and following them, Bryant and Tew. All these writers imply that the main body of Ngoni did not go farther north than Ufipa. It also provides a more reasonable chronology, for by Fraser's version we have to assume that within only about five years the main body of Ngoni traversed Tanganyika Territory from south to north and then back again. Lancaster is inconclusive on this point.[1]

7. *Mpezeni's kingdom*

Mgayi did not live long as regent and after his death the senior lieutenant of segment 1 made Mpezeni chief. There was a considerable shortage of food at the time and this, combined with dissension in the tribe about the succession, appears to have precipitated a further split. A follower of Zwangendaba called Zulu Gama, whose position in the segmentary organization seems not to have been recorded, led his segment off to the east, where in the vicinity of Songea he met with that group of Maseko Ngoni which we have mentioned earlier, and who probably broke off from the Ndebele some time prior to 1835. For a while the two groups operated as one but soon they split apart. Some people stayed on in Songea District, others went south and eventually rounded the southern end of Lake Nyasa to arrive in the Dedza District of southern Nyasaland, where they remain to-day.

Of those that remained behind under Mpezeni, the principal cleavage was between segments 2, 4, 5 and 6, all led by Mpezeni, on the one side and segment 3 with the headquarters of segment 1 on the other. Led by the senior lieutenant of segment 1, the latter group moved off to the south-east while Mpezeni moved west. While in the country of the Bisa, segment 2 broke off from Mpezeni and after settling for a while in Bemba country as an independent group it eventually went back to join segment 3. Mpezeni, with segments 4, 5 and 6, went south and eventually arrived in Fort Jameson District. His leadership of these segments seems not to have been questioned, but in the other group the senior lieutenant of segment 1 at first supported the headquarters of segment 3 against the claims to the chieftainship made by segment 8. Mtwalo, the son of Zwangendaba who had been put in charge of the headquarters of segment 3, protested, however, that the real head of that segment was Mwambera, head of segment 8, who thus became chief.

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 313; Soga, *South-Eastern Bantu*, p. 274; Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 7; Winterbottom, 'Outline histories', p. 18; Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 87; Young, *History*, pp. 115*f*; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 29*ff*; Bryant, *Olden times*, p. 467; Tew, *Lake Nyasa*, p. 54; Lancaster, 'Chronology', p. 86; Rangeley, 'Mwase', p. 63.

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When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4. It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay. For purposes of organization they were attached to the headquarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1 had gone away with Mwambera's group, the senior segment headquarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was to this village that people from all three segments came to the first fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4 they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contemplating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments 6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of considerable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group, for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company, segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate hierarchies of administration.

In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife. However this woman was prompted to independent status by the formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingeni) of which she became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

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Mpezeni

society. This was not so among the Ngoni. We know little about the way in which rights in cultivated and grazing-lands, hunting-rights and rights to water were distributed in the old Ngoni State, but if the present position is any guide, it seems likely that there was no well-developed system of land-holding. After dwelling in any one area for five years or so, the tribe moved on, partly because the fertility of the soil had been exhausted and partly for other reasons. Thus rights to land did not endure; land itself was expendable. What endured was merely the pattern of residential settlement, the arrangement of people in clusters and divisions and villages. Men and women lived where they belonged in the segmentary residential system, and relative geographical position did not determine, but was determined by, political affiliation.

Power in the State was thus power over people rather than over natural resources. It is true that cattle were valuable, but even they appear to have been eaten rather more often than in many tribes in which cattle are a form of wealth and investment rather than a regular item of diet. Furthermore, there was the doctrine that all cattle belonged to the Paramount Chief, so that village headmen with cattle in their byres held them, as it were, only by favour of the chief. The principal index of power was the number of a man's dependants. Political struggles were essentially not struggles to control wealth but to enjoy the support of followers. The main source of dependants was from raiding, and hence the allocation of captives was crucial to the working of the social system.

Fraser writes of the northern Nyasaland Ngoni, that warriors kept their own captives.[1] This does not seem to have been the usual procedure among the Fort Jameson group. Although some informants spoke as if they, or their forebears, had been actually taken by the person who became their lord, others said that in general all captives belonged to the Paramount Chief, and that he *could allocate them as he wished; usually, however, he allocated* them to the warriors who had captured them. It was a specific privilege of regional governors to keep their own captives. It seems probable that the Paramount Chief's allocations were made to the heads of segments to which the warriors belonged, for many of my informants were said to have been captured by a few people, some of whom are described by contemporary travellers as generals and war-leaders, and who are unlikely to have made many front-line captures themselves. Moreover, it seems that on small raids organized by the head of a major segment, not on a national scale,

[1] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 37.

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561 621 701 involving perhaps between a dozen and a hundred men, whereas the Paramount Chief could, so long as the State remained intact, command the services of perhaps 10,000 warriors.

561 727 621 This unifying effect of the age-set system applied particularly to the recent captives. It appears to have been through the regimental system that recent captives, both men and women, were indoctrinated into Ngoni ways and made to feel that they, too, were Ngoni. In the residential system, recent captives were dependants rather than lords. In the age-set system there was no such distinction. Men captives were drafted into the regiment appropriate to their apparent age, and boys were enrolled with their [702] coevals. They were called upon to fight in the same way as their aristocratic comrades, and were offered the same prospects of promotion, both within the age-set system and in the segmentary organization, as a result of successful fighting. Many of the well-remembered segment heads who achieved rapid promotion after capture are described as being successful warriors.

561 796 The annual first fruits ceremony (*ukwala*) was organized on an age-set basis. Although I was not able to establish details of this ceremony, it is clear that it was the most memorable national ceremony in the year, and that it provided supernatural sanction to the cohesion of the State and of the various regiments, under the leadership of the Paramount Chief. There were dances and mock fighting between regiments, and women also fought with each other in age-set groups of some kind or other. Read states that the description of the ceremony she was given showed much similarity with the corresponding Swazi ceremony. Commentators on the [771] Swazi and Zulu ceremonies describe them as strengthening the army and the kingship and unifying the nation, by a dramatic exaggeration of the conflicts as well as the links within it, and it is probable that this was true also of the Ngoni.[1]

[167] The Ngoni and their neighbours formed part of a wide social system, and the relationship between them was a political one. 648 When the Ngoni moved from place to place, the area round them 631 was vacated by its former inhabitants, so as to leave a dwelling-area for the Ngoni and a no-man's-land isolating it from other inhabited areas. These moves were forced on the indigenous people by Ngoni raids. There were no direct relations between [772] States, for there was little concerted opposition to Ngoni raiding

[1] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 470; Kuper *African Aristocracy*, pp. 223-5; Gluckman, 'First fruits ceremonies', pp. 30-3. The Swazi ceremony is called *incwala*, and Read's informants called it *ingwala*, but my informants had lost their click consonants.

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and the Ngoni did not seek to vanquish other tribes as states but rather to exhaust them by continued attrition. In later years it appears that a few minor chiefs who lived near the Fort Jameson group did manage to come to some agreement with it, for the Ngoni seem to have raided them only sporadically although warriors passed through their territories *en route* for more distant objectives; but this may have been due to the intervention of European traders. The powerful Cewa chief, Mwase Kasungu, may also have come to some arrangement with the Fort Jameson group even as he did with the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland.

Thus for the most part the external relations of the Ngoni State were warlike. The Ngoni did not trade with their neighbours, or send ambassadors to them, or enter into alliances with them; they merely killed or captured them.[1] The army was organized on a basis of age-sets, but the age-sets as such did not enter into political relations with their enemies. They merely executed the policy of the State or of the major segment to which they belonged.

3. *Officers of State*

The residential and age-set systems formed the structure of the State and there was no separate administrative system. There was little specialization of function among those who wielded power in the State, and those who did have special governmental tasks were all the lords of large segments.

The nearest approach to special political officers is to be found among the regional governors. A few of Zwangendaba's followers were with him from the beginning of his journey from Natal. Some of these were his agnates, but the descendants of others have now forgotten what relationship, if any, they bore to him. These early followers did not stand in the lord-lieutenant relationship to Zwangendaba, for in Ngoni usage all lieutenants were captives, or the descendants of captives, of their lords. They were organized in segments in the same way as everyone else, but the heads of some of these segments were known by the special term *mafumu ŋana* which I have translated as regional governor. Segments headed by regional governors were attached like other large segments to the various royal headquarters, and thus became primary divisions of the segments formed for queens. They differed from the lieutenants of the royal headquarters not only in their title but also in the greater freedom they were allowed in their segments. They kept their own villages separate from the royal villages to which they were attached politically.

[1] See pp. 253 f.

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The title of regional governor was also awarded by the Paramount Chief to certain of his favoured lieutenants. These promoted lieutenants, with their segments, retained their positions in the residential system unaltered but they were allowed to keep their own captives, a privilege of all regional governors. It seems probable, from incomplete information, that there were about a dozen regional governors of one kind or the other in the Fort Jameson group in 1898.[11] Despite the early date at which some of the regional governors' segments were formed during the migration, they did not expand as rapidly as did the segments led by the chief's queens and lieutenants, and in 1898 they comprised only a small portion of the State. In this respect the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland were organised differently, for there Read writes that the whole country was divided among regional governors, save for a central capital.[12] One of my informants stated that the head of a segment containing more than one village was never known as the lieutenant of his lord but was called, if he were not a kinsman of his lord, by the title regional governor. This is not true to-day, and in view of the large number of present-day commoner villages which claim to have been founded before the conquest, and whose heads are not regional governors, it seems unlikely to have been true earlier. On the other hand, all regional governors to-day are lords of segments containing more than one village, and this may well have been true before 1898 as well.

There were other minor honours similar to the title of regional governor and often awarded to the same people. These were the right to use the royal descent name *jere*, the right to a special praise name *ukhamu*, and the right to wear ox bones as a decoration.[13]

Wiese mentions certain special lieutenants who carried out tasks comparable to those of ministers of State. He describes three officials, one a minister for the interior, apparently responsible for the Paramount Chief's domestic affairs; another a minister of war who was also chief priest; and a minister in charge of ceremonials at national festivals. He says that the ministers carried out these special tasks in addition to their ordinary duties as lieutenants, and gives the names of two of the three, who were the first lieutenants of two major sections.[14] Thus although there was some differen-

[11] See Table VII. The sample used in this table contains more villages founded by regional governors than would occur in a representative sample.

[12] Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[13] Brauer, *Afrikaner*, p. 93; Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 479, and 'Geschichte', p. 198.

[14] Wiese, 'Expedition', pp. 469-70 and 'Geschichte', p. 188. These two men were the first lieutenants of segments 14 and 4.

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tiation of action between the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief, it is improbable that there were any special political offices outside the residential system.

Read mentions a political hierarchy with various titles.[14] At least in the Fort Jameson group, three of the four vernacular terms she gives were used in connexion with the residential system. The fourth, *amanusi*, was used in Zulu for messengers sent by a chief and a diacritical variant of this (*manyusi*) is so used nowadays at Fort Jameson. They have no executive authority and do not seem to have had any in the past.

Fraser, writing of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, says that there were two groups of lieutenants, one composed of men who became Ngoni before the crossing of the Zambezi and which exercised civil power, and the other which included men of more recent incorporation into the Ngoni tribe and which supplied the war leaders. He implies that the war leaders did not take part in the civil administration.

There seems not to have been this distinction between civil and military lieutenants among the Fort Jameson group. Wiese's 'Minister of War', who was referred to as a Commander-in-Chief by other contemporary writers, was a segment head with the same responsibilities towards his people as anyone else. The regiments had leaders responsible for the tactical control of warriors, some of whom were recently incorporated men, and presumably Fraser is referring to them, but his statement that the man often chosen to lead the whole army had no voice in the council conflicts with Elmslie's account of the same place and period. The war leader, Ng'oncoma, who is mentioned by Fraser, acted as regent on the death of the Paramount Chief in northern Nyasaland.[15]

The village as such had an importance independent of the size or order of segment of which it was headquarters or by which it was inhabited. There were no special terms for distinguishing the heads of large or small segments, for all were lords or ladies. But a special term[16] was used for a village headman, irrespective of the order of segment of which he was lord, provided he was not a lieutenant who had become head of the village in the absence of agnatic descendants of the founder. The use of a special term may have been an indication of the village headman's importance, part of which derived from the control he exercised over the cattle

[14] Read, 'Tradition', p. 462. cf. her account of the southern Ngoni in 'Standards', p. 16.

[15] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 32. cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 121, 289.

[16] *Inkhosana*. In Zulu, a small or petty chief. cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

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kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *ndusa*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 13*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive peoples*, pp. 203*f*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*f*, 109*f*, 196*f*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

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lord's dependants placed under a lieutenant's care became more specifically his dependants and eventually he appointed one or more of the men among them to be his own lieutenants. Thus it was possible for Z to be the lieutenant of Y and at the same time for Y to be the lieutenant of X. When Y died, his son became X's lieutenant or, if Y had no son, Z might succeed him as X's lieutenant.

A lord with but few dependants sometimes appointed one or more of them as his lieutenants without specifically dividing his dependants among them. Thus, a lieutenant might be appointed without the formation of a segment for him, and only later would he differentiate from the rest of his lord's dependants those for whom he was directly responsible.

The ranking of lieutenants was one of the least stable parts of the residential system. In a village under a lord there were lieutenants in charge of segments forming divisions within the village. As their segments grew in size, the lieutenants broke out of the village to found new satellite villages. A new set of lieutenants was gradually appointed to take their places in charge of the people remaining in the headquarters, and in the course of time the new set also broke away from the headquarters village.[51] Though they had moved out from the village the lieutenants still retained their positions as lieutenants within the primal segment of which it was the headquarters. Thus in a large segment containing many villages there was a long ranked roster of lieutenants, of which only the junior members still lived in the segment headquarters. Further proliferation of lieutenants sometimes took place when an heir succeeded as lord of the segment but did not found a new segment of his own. The new lord appointed his own lieutenants, so that within the same segment, and partly within the same settlement, there were two sets of lieutenants, one senior by time of appointment, the other enjoying the favour of the present head of the segment. When in these circumstances one of the senior set died, his eldest son sometimes had difficulty in asserting his position as lieutenant; and in this way the senior set, or part of it, lost control of the segment to the more recently appointed men.

It was in keeping with the expanding social boundaries of the State, and of the high degree of mobility within it, that there was no formally constituted council. Some contemporary accounts mention a tribal council, but it seems clear that until very recently, when the Administration tried to institute a council with defined membership, there has never been a legislative or executive body

[51] cf. my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 193f.

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to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various bevies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot intervene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[88] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[89]

Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[88] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.

[89] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

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power. The history of the State and indeed of each subdivision within it was encapsulated in the formal relations between royal headquarters and between segments. Yet the system was always growing and every few years brought a new royal capital, a new chief, new headquarters for the heirs of large segments and new ambitious men as lieutenants. Each generation also brought greater divergence of interest between the constituent parts of each segment and of the State, as we shall discuss later. Before going on to examine the conditions under which the State split we shall turn aside to compare the Ngoni residential system with similar social structures found in some other societies.

4. *Continually segmenting systems*

Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, in their *African Political Systems*, have provided us with a solid foundation for a typology of political systems in simple societies. It is therefore appropriate to consider what place the Ngoni State has in this typology. The authors distinguish three types of political system in Africa,[34] and we shall attempt to determine to which of these the Ngoni State belongs.

Their first type includes those small societies in which everyone is kin to everyone else, and in which political relations are coterminous with kinship relations. It is clear that Ngoni society was not of this kind.

The other two types are those referred to as primitive states, or Group A, and stateless societies, or Group B. Primitive states are characterized by the presence of organized government, i.e. centralised authority, administrative machinery and judicial institutions, and of cleavages of wealth, privilege and status corresponding to the distribution of power and authority. In stateless societies there is no government, in this sense, and political relations are primarily regulated by a segmentary system of permanent unilateral descent groups.

This classification is sometimes taken to imply that segmentary systems are found only in stateless societies but not in primitive states. This implication does not follow inevitably from the scheme of classification, though it is compatible with it. It is, however, easy to assume that this implication is intended, for the authors frequently use the adjective segmentary to characterise stateless societies in contrast to primitive states. This implication is false, as can be shown by reference to a number of societies, and cannot have been intended by the authors, for elsewhere Fortes has written that 'It

[34] Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, *African Political Systems*, pp. 6f.

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is quite possible for the sub-divisions of a centralized state to have a segmentary social organization'.[35]

This unfortunate muddle is not helped by the use of the adjective pyramidal to characterize the social organization of primitive states, for when we need a visual symbol for a segmentary system as found in stateless societies, we use a triangle or pyramid.[36] There is, on reflection, an obvious difference between one office-holder having authority over a number of subordinates and one segment containing lesse segments within itself; but this difference is obscured by the similarities of spatial metaphor.

Under these circumstances, it seems best to eschew the use of pyramidal or segmentary as unqualified descriptions of either group of societies, and to follow the authors' alternative suggestion by speaking of Group A ocieties as primitive states, and of those in Group B as stateless societies. The presence or absence of a segmentary political system may now be handled as a separate question, providing a clasification cutting across the division into states and stateless societes.

We have spoken thoughout this chapter of Ngoni society as a state, and this usage is inaccord with the definition of a state given here. The Paramount Chief with his lieutenants exercised supreme authority, there was a highly organized administrative machine, and there was an organied method of settling disputes within the State. There were onlyslight variations in wealth except in the control of cattle, but pivilege and status were expressed in the residential system and wre inseparable from the exercise of power and authority.

The presence or abence of a segmentary political system can itself be divided into wo questions; was there a segmentary system, and if so, was it he political system? If we have used the term segment correctly, hen it is clear that the Ngoni did have a segmentary system, and that political relations within, but not without, the State were largely regulated by it. However, when Fortes and Evans-Pritchard use this word segmentary in their typology they are referring exclusively to lineage segments, or to major groups very similar in form to lineages. A segment of the Ngoni residential system was not quite the same as a segment of a lineage, and we must therefore examine what may usefully be meant by the term segmentary as applied to a social system before we can answer these questions.

[35] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 234.

[36] e.g. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, p. 101, and Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 34, diagrams.

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A wide variety of forms of organization can legitimately be spoken of as segmentary, and can be represented visually by pyramids and triangles. We may even speak of our own system of local government as containing segments (rural districts) which are characteristically grouped together to form segments of higher order (counties) and which are divided internally into segments of lower order (parishes). This *nesting* aspect of segmentation, as we may perhaps call it, by which social groups are arranged in a hierarchy one within another, is of too wide an occurrence to be useful for our purposes. Almost every known political system must be segmentary in this sense.

Nor is it the unilineal character of lineage systems which clearly marks them off from others. Until recently it was the general rule in Europe that a child took the nationality of its father, and we were therefore quite justified in talking of European nations as unilineally recruited groups. Yet we do not usually need a typology which places African lineage systems and European nations in the same category.

What then is the particular characteristic of lineage systems which significantly distinguishes them from the fixed social divisions of many states, and which they share with the Ngoni residential system? The critical characteristic seems to me to be that segmentation goes on continually. Every man (or woman) is the potential founder of a segment, and although a segment once formed tends to persist in time, more and more segments of lower and lower order are all the while being formed within it. We cannot count the number of levels at which the State is subdivided, as we can when there is a fixed hierarchy, for these points of subdivision are continually shifting with the passage of time and with change of context. It is difficult to attach labels to segments of different order or of different span, save in precisely defined situations. The magnitude of this difficulty is apparent from Fortes's elaborate descriptive armamentum, with its morphological minimal, effective minimal, nuclear, inner, medial, and maximal lineages, terms referring to successive stages in the life of a single segment, stages which occur at different times in the histories of different segments. The same difficulty arises in describing Ngoni segments, but it is not so pressing, since there was not the same differentiation of function related to degree of segmentation as is found among the Tallensi.

Because of this continuous process of segment formation, the system is governed by the same principles at all levels. A group formed in a specific way at a low level eventually becomes a high-level group, and thus at any one time the constancy of past formation

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is reflected in present uniformity of organization.[37] Fortes, writing on the concept of a segmentary society, says

> '. . . It means that small units of a particular form are, like cells, associated together into larger units of the same general form, and these again associated into still larger units of analogous or identical form, and so on up to the limits of the system . . . the principles operating on one level presuppose the principles operating on a lower level.'[38]

Here he is describing the egalitarian, homogeneous, stateless society of Taleland, but his description fits Ngoni society very closely. The one significant difference in this matter between Ngoni and Tale society is that Tale society goes back into the unremembered past whereas Ngoni society was founded at a known and remembered time and place. Hence a certain amount of extemporization was necessary to get the system going, to adapt Nguni social organization to the pecularities of Ngoni life, as we have noted in the relationship between the first Paramount Chief and his companions who became regional governors. Apart from this initial piece of social engineering, the system continued to perpetuate itself until checked by quite different external agencies.

In all these societies, the continually segmenting system has or had political functions. We may well ask if there are other societies in which there are continually segmenting systems lacking political functions. Gluckman has listed a large number of societies stated to possess corporate lineages, including some states as defined above. Some of these, for example the Tswana,[39] appear to organize their internal political relations not on the basis of these corporate lineages but through some separate administrative apparatus. What then is the social function of the lineage system in these societies, and is it continually segmenting? Evans-Pritchard has suggested that segmentation occurs where groups have political functions.[40] Nevertheless, among the Tswana, lineages do segment, even though they have only slight political significance, political action being largely determined by the ward organization.

We shall then take this process of continual formation of segments, which Firth calls the branching or ramifying process,[41]

[37] Fortes, *Web of Kinship*, p. 241, suggests the term 'organic' to describe such a system. This word has so many other meanings that I am reluctant to use it.
[38] Fortes, *Dynamics*, p. 239.
[39] Gluckman in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, p. 4. cf. Schapera, *Tswana law and custom*.
[40] Evans-Pritchard, 'Nilotic-speaking peoples', pp. 163*f*. and 'Nuer of the Southern Sudan', p. 287.
[41] Firth, *Tikopia*, p. 371.

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as diagnostic of the presence of the kind of segmentary society in which we are interested. All the societies included by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard in their stateless category, i.e. Logoli, Tallensi and Nuer, have continually segmenting political systems. Of the societies with government, the Zulu were like the Ngoni in being a State and yet having a political system which was continually segmenting. Both of these states were organized by a segmentary system even at the highest level, so that it does not seem necessary to follow Fortes in restricting segmentary systems to only the sub-divisions of states. In Shaka's time various changes came about in Zululand, such as the concentration of the army in a central area, which lessened the importance of the segmentary organization. But in the eighteenth century large-scale relations between and within the Ngoni chiefdoms were governed by the agnatic segmentary organization, that is, by the division of the people into clans, sub-clans, and lineages and by the continual transfer of allegiance by lineage segments from one chief to another. Even during the period of the Zulu empire, the continual segmentation of the constituent tribes was important in maintaining the power of the central government over them.[2]

If one of the main characteristics of the well-known African lineage systems, both in stateless societies like the Nuer, Tallensi, Logoli and Gusii, and in primitive states like the Zulu, is their political function, we may well inquire if these systems are not also one type in a more general category of political systems. Although lineage relations are essentially distinct from kinship relations, a lineage system defines political relations in the idiom of kinship. Thus in agnatic systems, the relationship between territorial groups may be expressed in terms of the relationships between founding ancestors who were brothers or fathers and sons. We have seen how among the Ngoni the relationship between captor and captive, between lord and dependant, and hence the relationship between the segments they founded, was expressed in agnatic terms. The relationship between husband and wife, lord and lady, was employed to define the relationship between the political groups they led, and in this respect the Ngoni system may be seen as taking one stage further the process employed in lineage systems, where most relationships of this kind are phrased agnatically. Among the south-eastern Bantu, however, the relationship between lineage segments founded by paternal half-brothers is defined in terms of their mothers' position as co-wives. Among some central African peoples, this process has been carried even further than

[2] Gluckman, 'Modern Zululand', pp. 147-54.

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among the Ngoni. Thus the device of perpetual kinship among the Yao, by which the holders of certain chiefly offices stand in relation to one another in a fixed arrangement of kinship positions, of Paramount Chief to son and to sister's son and to brother,[49] would seem to be an example of what is essentially the same process as that by which the dominant lineage in one part of Nuerland is conceived of as descended from a brother of the founding ancestor of another dominant lineage. Where a political relationship is expressed in terms of the connexion between husband and wife, rather than between brothers' or sisters' sons, we may find that a woman is used to embody the political relationship, and she then plays what is essentially a political role. The many wives of the Ngoni Paramount Chief were clearly used in roles of this kind. Not only were they *rapporteurs* for the Chief, as Deare points out,[50] but they were also living symbols of the political relationship between their segments and the State as a whole. Another central African example of this is the Lele institution of 'wife of the village' by which a village, as a group, may stand as daughter's husband or wife's parent to its chief.[51]

Wherever political relationships of this kind are embodied in persons who have private lives of their own, be they queens or sons-in-law of the village, there is bound to be some domestic and inter-personal relationship alongside the corresponding political relationship. But that should not obscure from us the essentially political role played by individuals in these positions. The analogy with the dynastic marriages of Western Europe is clear.

One of the characteristics of lineage systems and of the Ngoni residential system is that the transition from the ties of domesticity and close kinship to purely political relations is a gradual one. The same principles of organization apply at all levels, and it is gradually with the passage of time and with increasing structural separation and internal segmentation that inter-personal relations are replaced by those between groups, and actions based on sentiments of love and hate give way to those based ultimately on an appeal to force. Relations between the larger segments of a lineage, although expressed in the idiom of kinship, and although possibly explainable historically in kinship terms, are relations between political units, whereas the relationship between brothers living under the same roof is not governed by political considerations. The critical point at which relationships of increasing scale become dominantly

[49] Mitchell, 'Social organization of the Yao'
[50] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April.
[51] Tew, 'Polyandry among the Lele'

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political would seem to be, for example, at the medial lineage among the Tallensi, beyond which generation differences are not recognised; and at the village among the Nuer. It seems probable that in the old Ngoni system the village was also the significant unit, above which relationships were dominantly political and below which they were largely determined by the multiplex sentiments and activities arising out of kinship and domestic association. This is certainly so in modern Ngoniland, although the same principles of organization no longer apply at all levels.

I have described elsewhere the critical position of the modern Ngoni headman, linking the political system with the network of ties of kinship and co-residence operative within the village, and similar conditions have been reported elsewhere by Gluckman and Mitchell. Above the village, whether in a state or in a stateless society, relations are in the main between enduring groups and are defined with respect to interests vital to the survival of these groups, even if expressed in the idiom of kinship.[36]

Granted the existence of primitive states with continually segmenting political systems, such as the Zulu and Ngoni, it is then possible to look at from another point of view the various African political systems for which there is adequate information. In terms of political segmentation on a unilineal basis, states like the Ngoni and Zulu are closer in form to the stateless societies of the Nuer, Tallensi, Gusii and Logoli than to the Nupe and Kede states with their administrative systems largely independent of unilineal affiliation. To document this point fully would take us beyond the scope of this book; our purpose here is merely to emphasize the importance in comparative studies of examining political structures from more than one point of view.

When talking of states, we make the convenient distinction between internal and external political relations. No such simple distinction can be made with stateless societies, for in them relations which are external to one segment are internal to the next higher segment, and yet may still legitimately be regarded as political relations. The pre-Shakan chiefdoms of Zululand formed a system similar to the Tallensi maximal lineages, and we may speak therefore in that instance of a segmentary system regulating political relations between states. Ngoni external relations were not regulated in this way, for the Ngoni were isolated and unique in a region

[36] For this section, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* and 'Kinship among the Nuer'; Fortes, *Web of kinship*; Wagner, *Bantu of North Kavirondo*; Mayer, *Lineage principle in Gusii society*; Gluckman, 'Analysis of a social situation' and 'Kingdom of the Zulu'; Gluckman, *et al.*, 'Village headman'.

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where other states, if states they were, organised themselves on quite different lines. Ngoni external political relations were restricted to acts of war. They harried their neighbours but did not bring them into enduring political relationship. When fission occurred, when the Ngoni State split into two, then indeed the fighting that took place was war between segments, and for a while an inter-segment relationship which had been internal became external and was mediated through force. Relations of this kind did not persist, for independent Ngoni groups soon diverged from each other, seeking weaker enemies.

5. *Lineage systems compared*

Our argument in the preceding section was directed to showing that the old Ngoni society was a state in which internal political relations were largely determined by a continually segmenting residential system. We compared it with other societies in which lineage systems provided the basis for political relations. We now have to ask how did this residential system differ from these similar systems; was it a kind of lineage system?

Gluckman has set out nine criteria by which a lineage system may be distinguished and which we may apply to the residential system.[87] In the first place we must expand the meaning of the word descent before we can call an Ngoni segment a unilineal descent group. However it seems justifiable to regard the process by which an Ngoni captive sundered the ties linking him to his natal community and was then incorporated in a new one as a kind of social death and re-birth.[88] We may then speak of a captive being socially descended from his lord. More familiarly, we must use descent to include social descent from a man when biological descent is from his kinsman acting as pro-husband for him after his death, and from a woman when biological descent is from her linked junior co-wife. With these extensions of meaning, we may regard the residential system as composed of unilineal descent groups.

Lineage segments, particularly small ones, are usually exogamous, whereas no Ngoni segment was automatically an exogamous unit. True agnatic kin could not marry one another, but the quasi-agnatic relationship between a lord and his dependants was not a bar, and a man and woman with the same captor were free to marry each other, even though they both called their lord *father*.

[87] Gluckman, in Mitchell and Barnes, *Lamba village*, pp. 4-5.
[88] cf. Warner's description of the passing of light-skinned Negroes in the United States into the White caste as 'social death'.

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The genealogies which related members of one segment to those of another were made up not only of links from father to son but also from lord to dependant, and were expressed in terms of the names of segments rather than the names of the people who headed them. A man related himself to the Paramount Chief not by his own genealogy but by the pedigree of the segment to which he belonged.[*] Although the number of links in such a pedigree may have been half a dozen or more, it did not cover more than two or three generations, whereas in most lineage systems remembered genealogies cover many more generations. The present kinship nomenclature, which mainly employs words of Nguni origin, does not group relatives on a lineage, or segmental, basis but by generation. Presumably the system of nomenclature in use during the early stages of the Ngoni migration was similar to the present Zulu system in which lineage categories are used slightly. Tribes like the Shona and Cewa, from whom many captives were taken, employ systems of nomenclature with great lineage emphasis, but this emphasis is patrilineal among the former and matrilineal among the latter. The difficulty of combining patrilineal and matrilineal categories may have prompted the emergence of a generation system of nomenclature.[**]

Another point of difference between the Ngoni and many people with lineage systems is that, other than possibly the rites associated with choosing a new village site, there seem to have been no ritual observances or ancestor cult which would have differentiated one segment from another and united the various segments of lower order within a higher one. The only ancestors to whom supplication was made were those of the Paramount Chief. They were believed to be concerned with the well-being of the whole nation, and when sacrifices were made to them, the officiants were not their agnatic descendants but the Paramount Chief's lieutenants. We may, however, regard the byre in the headquarters village as a ceremonial, rather than a ritual, centre for a large segment.

In these four respects the Ngoni residential system differed from most lineage systems. On the other hand, in respect of other criteria it was like them. A segment recognized its identity and unity in contrast to other groups; rights and obligations of segment membership were distinguished from those of kinship; segments endured in time beyond the death of their founding members;

[*] cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 466.

[**] cf. Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 221-3; Gluckman, 'Kinship and marriage', pp. 170-1; Holleman, *Shona kinship*, pp. 1-18; Peristiany, 'Terms of relationship', pp. 44-6.

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segments nested in the same way as lineage segments; and a segment could be referred to by the name of its original head. A residential segment was not associated with a particular locality in quite the same way as lineage segments often are among settled peoples, for even the State itself was not tied to any particular place. Within the area occupied by the State at any one time, the villages belonging to one major segment seem to have intermingled with those of another, for there were not any temporary boundaries defining major segment areas, even for those led by regional governors. But smaller segments, occupying single villages or less, may be said to have been associated with a particular locality at any one time.

Our concept of a lineage system would then require considerable stretching to include the Ngoni residential system. It seems preferable to employ the wide term 'continually segmenting systems' when speaking of this general class of system, and to distinguish within this category a number of different varieties. Lineage systems belong to one variety, the Ngoni residential system to another. These two varieties do not exhaust the category. The Nyakyusa system of continually bifurcating states appears to belong to a third variety, and there may be more.

There are other criteria which have been used to distinguish different varieties of lineage system, and which we may apply summarily to the Ngoni residential system. Despite the great importance of women in the system, it was clearly a patrilineal and not a matrilineal system. It was a graded system with a single head to each segment, like the Zulu and unlike the egalitarian Nuer. The system had a single apex, one highest segment embracing the whole society, like the Gusii and unlike the multi-capped society of the Tallensi. As a corollary of this it had sharp boundaries and did not form part of a chain of interlinked societies. There was little economic differentiation save in the control of cattle and there was, on the surface, complete cultural homogeneity imposed by the State.

The characteristic formation of rump segments is lacking in many lineage systems, but is found among the Zulu and in the Swazi lineage,[1] and perhaps more widely, although in both these societies the process does not seem to have been as greatly developed as among the Ngoni. Among the Zulu and Swazi it led to a series of homesteads or villages corresponding to successive holders of the office of lineage head or king. Among the Ngoni not only was each

[1] cf. Hellmann, 'Twee-eenheidsbegrippe van die Zulu' and 'Zulu (stam)', Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 703*f*, s.v. *isizinda*; and Kuper, *African Aristocracy*, pp. 40*f*.

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successive head of a *major* segment memorialized in this way, but the *major divisions* of his polygynous household as well.

6. *Splitting the State*

When splits occurred in the State, the cleavages were along segmentary, and not age-set, lines. The headquarters of the highest segment was differentiated from the major subdivisions within that segment, and the various divergent groups can be identified by the different segments which they represented. Once fission had taken place, a realignment of segments was sometimes necessary. When after the death of Zwangendaba his great wife's segment was split, in each divergent group the man who was nearest in the line of succession to head of her segment claimed to be the rightful heir, and on the strength of that claim assumed leadership of the group.

Fission in the State was the end result of segmentation within it. Here we are using these two terms for two different processes. By segmentation we mean the process by which any social group becomes subdivided internally while retaining its own unity and cohesion. By fission we mean the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity.[48] Fission in the Ngoni State occurred without affecting the arrangement of segments within each group, but did disrupt the highest segment of all, within which the divergent groups had hitherto been contained. Segmentation was a process of growth taking place at all levels but particularly at the bottom of the hierarchy of political groups, while fission was a process occurring only at the highest level. The process of segmentation in one generation could not alter the formal arrangement of higher segments determined in the previous generation, even though with each generation there was in fact an effective shift in the distribution of political power accompanied by spatial differentiation. The process of fission did not bring into being any new segments, but merely dissolved the highest segment of all as a cohering political unit. The two processes were thus formally and in reality quite distinct, even though it is clear that they were not independent of one another. Increasing divergence of interest found expression at first in the creation of separate segments and ultimately in the formation of separate states.

The processes of segmentation and of spatial differentiation within the State were in general peaceful. Fission was a hazardous

[48] This use of terms differs from that of Fortes. He uses 'segmentation' to refer to a state of internal subdivision within a group, and 'fission' to refer to the process of internal subdivision. *Cf.* Fortes, *TSS of Ashanti*, *passim*. I am indebted to Mrs. U. P. Mayer for this observation.

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procedure. Segment 2 broke away from segment 3 and later rejoined it peaceably, but other instances of fission were accompanied by fighting. The leader of each divergent group rallied his warriors, the one to protect his flight, the other to pursue and annihilate the departing traitors. If the flight was successful, the leader of the new State assumed the salutations and marks of rank of a Paramount Chief and held his own first fruits ceremony. The internal organization of his State and of the one he had left continued on the same lines as before. This seems to have been the sequence of events when Zulu Gama, Chiwale Ndhlovu, and segment 7 each broke away from the main body. When the residue of segment 1 broke away from segment 4, the dissident group destroyed the crops of those who remained, but Chibambo does not mention fighting on that occasion.[48] There are two possible instances of a divergent group going away to join some other state. Segment 7 was associated for a while with Mirambo and his Rugaruga, and Zulu Gama joined forces in Tanganyika with the Maseko Ngoni, now in southern Nyasaland.[49] But neither of these alliances lasted long. As we would expect there is less evidence for the unsuccessful attempts at fission which it seems reasonable to assume must have taken place. I did, however, collect one clear account of a regional governor who was thought by Zwangendaba to be lagging behind on the migration with the intention of deserting with his segment. Zwangendaba sent an army against the regional governor, who was killed. His segment, under the charge of his son, was forced to live in the village of a lieutenant of Zwangendaba's father. It is said that Zwangendaba continued to punish the would-be rebels by drafting members of the segment to other parts of the residential system from time to time.

Thus in one sense the State was held together by armed force. Certainly there were mystical values associated with the chieftainship. It is now difficult to gain much precise information on this topic but it is apparent from present-day practice and from comparative evidence that the chiefly office was hedged about with mystical sanctions and that the chief was no mere secular ruler. Yet it is also clear that these values were associated with the office of chieftainship rather than with the particular occupant of the office, and that they were linked to successful military achievement. We might also suggest that because so many men became Ngoni only after they had grown up in quite different cultures, mystical

[48] Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 30.
[49] Rosaleen, *Livingstone*, p. 289; and Hard Continent, i, p. 400; Hemsbell, 'Ruguruguru', passim.

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sanctions were less effective than they are in more homogeneous societies; but this can hardly be proved. The fact remains that some segments did break off, that the State attempted to annihilate them, and that sometimes they were successful, probably sometimes not. The transition was sharp between the condition in which a segment was an integral loyal part of the State and that in which it was itself a new State. Spatially a State was surrounded by a no-man's-land. Everything inside the uninhabited ring of country was in the State, everything outside it was not. Within the State there was no feuding such as sometimes characterizes societies whose political boundaries are not uniquely defined. In Ngoni society, murder was punished by the State, and the cattle paid by the murderer's kin were handed over to the Paramount Chief, not to the kin of the murdered man. The Paramount Chief, it is true, usually handed on the cattle to them, but the method of settlement is indicative of the power of the State. There was only one national first fruits ceremony, accompanied by summary penalties of death for those whose actions threatened its mystical effectiveness, as for example by singing the ceremonial songs at the wrong time. Furthermore, there was a single age-set system, in which the members of each set were drawn from all segments, and because of the activities of the sets, the segments united in aggression against the external world.

When a split threatened, the issue was decided by force of arms. Yet in a quite significant sense the cohesion of the State was not based on force at all. The Paramount Chief had no monopoly of force, for as we have seen there were representatives of every major segment in each age-set, and any lord who could claim the loyal support of his segment had at his disposal a fighting force as efficient as that of anyone else. Within the army there was little or no technical, as distinct from tactical, specialization and the Paramount Chief had no bodyguard or other specially recruited force on which he could rely. The Ngoni were contemptuous of guns, for the Tower muskets used by the Arabs and others could not penetrate their shields at normal firing range, and such guns as the Ngoni possessed were used only for making a noise.[48] There was no strong central power posed against the provincial lords, as in some societies. The strength of any segment was measured by its internal cohesion, its size and fighting ability, as matched against the cohesion, size and ability of the forces that could be marshalled against it. While he was loyal, expansion in a man's segment

[48] Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 477, and 'Geschichte', p. 198; Read, 'Tradition', p. 461, *Loc.*; Young, *History*, p. 103.

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619 brought more support for his lord; but as the segment expanded
631 his chances of setting himself up as a chief increased and his loyalty became less certain. Thus the appeal to armed force came only as one phase in a general struggle for power carried on simultaneously at many different levels and by a variety of methods. The conflicting ambitions of each lord, each a potential rival of the State,
[669] combined to maintain the State and to reduce the likelihood of successful fission.

692 The conflict between identification with one's lord and
643 differentiation from him, between what Fortes has called the
681 centripetal and centrifugal forces in a segmentary society, is brought
631 out clearly in the enforcement of the death penalty. Wiese implies that only the Paramount Chief had the legal power . . sentence
[684] adulterers to death and that this offence was the ground for the majority of death sentences.[68] However, my own informants stated that senior lieutenants did sometimes sentence people to death without referring the matter to the Paramount Chief. The Chief would later come to hear of an incident of this kind and would then either praise the lieutenant for acting in the interests of the Chief and for ruling his people well, or else abuse him for usurping the powers of the Chief and warn him to be more careful in future. A successful lieutenant might establish his own major segment and
[687] eventually his own State; but if he moved in this direction prematurely he was likely to be killed for treason. This same inherent conflict exists to-day, albeit with different groupings and different sanctions.

7. *Stability*

611 The most striking differences between the residential system
619 and most lineage systems were the high rate of segmentation, and
178 the flexibility of the system. Segmentation in a lineage system depends basically on the unalterable processes of human reproduction and maturation. Until a man's children become adults his agnatic segment cannot split. The Ngoni, by recruiting many
[161] of their members when they were already grown up, were able to
[597] increase their population at a prodigious rate and with it the degree of segmentation of the State. As the Ngoni army increased in size, so it became easier for them to capture more people, so that what we may describe as an inflationary spiral in population was set up. The Ngoni State was like a snowball which grows larger and larger as it is pushed from place to place, but still remains uniform throughout. At last it becomes unwieldly and must be broken

[68] Wiese, 'Expedition', pp. 471-2, and 'Geschichte', pp. 189-90.

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to which she had belonged before her marriage, and in particular sent some of her children to her parents to be cared for until adolescence. In this way a web of affinal ties was built up, cutting across both the residential and age-set systems and acting against the fissile tendencies in the former.[1]

The ties that bound a man to his age-mates and to his matrilateral kin cut across those linking him to his lord and to his dependants. Nevertheless, it seems probable that even without this arrangement of cross-cutting ties, the segmentary system itself was not easily fissile. The State as a whole was primarily held together by its enemies, the external enemies who made it unsafe for small bodies of Ngoni to venture across the no-man's-land on their own, and the internal rivals who competed for the Paramount Chief's favour and who bided their time until they could lead off their major segments as independent states. The flexibility of the system allowed men to achieve power within it, and provided a way of balancing the interests of different groups, as well as making possible the few instances of fusion that did occur. The Paramount Chief was powerful, not only because of his mystical attributes and of the military successes of his people, but because he was the government. Through him the common interests of the tribe as a whole were expressed in an organised manner as against the interests of minority groups. Despite its segmentary form, Ngoni society was a State.

In later years two changes took place which increased the stability of the State, at least from a short-term point of view. In the first place, the external environment altered due to the penetration into the central African hinterland by Arabs, Portuguese and British. With this topic we shall deal in Chapter III. The second change, which seems to have taken place among the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, was in the internal organization of the State. In that particular group, neighbouring tribes were brought under subjection as political groups, not as individuals, and the conquered peoples were either allowed to retain their own chiefs as subordinate rulers or else were attached in large batches to various important headquarters. A distinction emerged between the aristocracy and the conquered peoples, and the army was no longer simply the aggregation of age-sets but included quasi-professionals supplied by a near-by unconquered Cewa chief Mwase Kasungu, who were armed with guns. Similar changes may well have taken place among the Ngoni groups in Tanganyika, who were more closely involved with the slave trade to the coast

[1] See the discussion of affinal linking in my *Marriage*, pp. 10-11.

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than were the groups further inland. However, the evidence suggests that so great changes of this kind took place among the Fort Jameson group under Mpezeni, and it is therefore with changes in the external environment of the State that we shall be chiefly concerned.

In this early period, between 1821 and about 1883, there was for most of the time a situation in which the forces attaching people to the State were stronger than those tending to split it. The age-set system, the web of affinal ties, the attachment of segment members to their lord, the reliance of a lord on the support of his dependants, and the external opposition of all non-Ngoni, these all held the State together. Shifts in the balance of power could be made without disrupting the State because the State was continually expanding, and expansion gave it flexibility. The weakest links in the State were at the top, and it was these that were most strained as the State grew in numbers and in degree of segmentation. Under critical conditions, as on the death of the Paramount Chief or when the need for food necessitated a move from one tribal site to another, these were the links that gave way and fresh independent States were formed. Fission in the State led to consolidation of ties in each divergent group, but the same processes leading to further fission began again at once.

During the period of migration the Ngoni flourished. They were successful brigands on the march. Yet they were brigands in a poor land, and despite their military successes their economy remained one of subsistence cultivation, even though others did some of the cultivation for them. They were well organised for war and their enemies were not, but both they and their enemies were poor people relying on shifting cultivation with a poor technology and with access to only moderately valuable natural resources. The hinterland of Africa provided the Ngoni with an area within which they could operate successfully, but this area was bounded by the lands of wealthier and mightier peoples. Towards the end of the century the boundaries of the area began to contract. The Ngoni found themselves in conflict not with subsistence cultivators using hoes and spears, but with peoples using writing and guns and possessing apparently limitless resources of cloth, beads and gunpowder. We now have to turn to the story of the Ngoni struggle with these Arab and European invaders.

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Madunga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[89]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[90] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tonga who had been promoted at their expense.[91] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[92] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingo on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[93] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tainke, named Zaimene and Madzimoi, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[94] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[95]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[89] Swann's report for 1898, *B.C.A.C.*, iv, 3 (15 April 1899), p. 1.
[90] Wiese, 'Confederation', p. 187.
[91] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 94; Chilambwe, *My Ngoni*, p. 93; cf. Young, *History*, p. 110 who contests the role played by witchfinders in this incident.
[92] As reported by Warren in June 1898, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[93] Wiese, 'Expedition', p. 455.
[94] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingo, Nzermane, and Madzimoi.
[95] *ibid.*, 8 June.

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to recover under bush fallow. The long-term carrying capacity of the land before the conquest cannot have been much greater than its present average value of 23 persons to the square mile.[144] This it is certain that in pre-conquest times the Ngoni were settled at a density even more in excess of the critical value than it is now, despite alienation. There cannot have been much cultivable land in reserve and the State was exhausting the wealth of its own soil as well as drawing on the resources of its neighbours. Thus even if the large villages had not been burnt, the same number of people could not for long have continued to live in them practising subsistence agriculture. A reduction in the density of population necessarily involved under this economy a reduction in the size of villages, for Ngoni do not like to live more than an hour's walk from their gardens. As it was, the villages were burnt, many Ngoni of Crown origin left Ngoniland, and much of the more densely settled land, carrying up to 140 persons to the square mile, was alienated to Europeans within six years of the war.[145] The arrangement of persons over the land and the activities they carried on were both dramatically altered by the European conquest. It is, therefore, not surprising that the old society was so drastically changed at the same time. What is perhaps surprising is the extent to which, as we shall see, the forms of grouping of the past have influenced the forms of the new society.

In brief, the old political system was a system of segments, the new one is a system of villages and counties. The county segment links the two systems, but there is no function in the new order for segments embracing several counties or for those that embrace only part of a county. Within the village, the segmentary processes still go on, but at this level of organization we are dealing with kinship rather than politics. When a segment grows beyond the bounds of a single village, it begins to fade away, and we are left with a network of ties which link villages with one another but which do not define mutually exclusive groups as existed in pre-conquest times. The uncertainty about how counties should be divided internally is an indication of the lack of function of these intermediate segments. For some purposes, such as the organization of royal hunts, a county is divided into a number of rural districts. These are geographically defined areas, and it is sometimes possible to say that such-and-such a man, usually a senior lieutenant of the county segment, is the most important person in such-and-such a rural area. However, the recognizable rural districts in a county do not

[144] Allan, *Land Usage*, pp. 16-17.
[145] *N.R.R.G.C.*, ii, 2 (15 March 1914), p. 30.

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always exhaust its total area and districts sometimes overlap. When I inquired of chiefs and their councillors how their counties were subdivided in terms of allegiance, rather than area, I was rarely given a clear answer. The names of various men of importance in the county were mentioned, but there was no consensus about their relative status or the limits of their territories. In the present system village headmen have definite responsibilities and so have county chiefs, but there are no intermediate posts. Segments have given way to counties and villages.

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These decisions have been taken within frames of reference beyond the reach of our analysis and beyond the reach of Ngoni persuasion. We are here concerned with the way in which Ngoni society has been adapted and has adapted itself to these diverse intrusions from outside.

3. *Chiefs*

In the old residential system there was no definite category of persons whom we regard as chiefs. In the literature the lords of major segments are sometimes called chiefs, sometimes indunas (i.e. lieutenants), but it is clear that the importance of any particular segment varied from one time and situation to another, and that the only constant relations between positions in the social structure were vertical ones, between lord and dependant, and not horizontal, between persons at the same level in the hierarchy but in different parts of it. The administrative scheme introduced by the Whites provided for horizontal categorization as well as vertical grouping. There were to be a definite number of chiefs, district headmen, and later village headmen, whose names would appear on the Administration's files. The only indigenous categories of this kind were those of Paramount Chief and regional governor, and for this reason alone it was inevitable that the relationship between the old and new systems should be complex. Although the young Mpezeni II was not the only person to be called chief, his superior status was always recognized and later received formal ratification in the qualification Paramount. The regional governors may, perhaps, have formed a category of persons at the same level in the old hierarchy, but they were not very numerous, perhaps only a dozen in number, and under the new dispensation some managed to become chiefs or district headmen, while others failed to do so. Village headmen in the old system were lords of segments of many different orders of segmentation and of varying importance. If the large pre-conquest villages had continued, then perhaps their heads might have secured Administrative recognition. As it was, post-conquest settlements were all much smaller and there were more of them.

Apart from these formal considerations, the peculiar circumstances of the war introduced distortion. Some important people were killed in the fighting, others ran away, and the followers of others were scattered. More significantly, the arrival of the Administration, of traders and missions, provided means whereby people whose segments were of minor importance could advance themselves politically and gain control of large sections of the population.

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In these three counties there were no instances of two other types of village found rarely in Ngoniland. Occasionally an immigrant labourer working on the Fort Jameson tobacco farms manages to attract sufficient followers from among other labourers and his local affines to found a new village in an Ngoni chiefdom. The other rare type of village is formed by direct administrative action. The Administration has been largely concerned to amalgamate existing villages rather than to create new ones. In at least one instance, however, scattered clusters of huts inhabited by people who had fled from several different villages to avoid coming under agricultural control have been united into a new village under a headman of their own choosing. One example of each of these rare types of village is included in the sample of villages analysed in Table VII (p. 135).

TABLE IV. ORIGIN OF VILLAGES IN SELECTED COUNTIES, 1948

	Number of villages in county, classified by origin				
County	*County segment*	*Other segment under Mpezeni*	*Other Ngoni groups*	*Other tribes, joining Ngoni after 1898*	*Total*
X	60 (70%)	4 (5%)	1 (1%)	18 (22%)	83 (100%)
Y	26 (55%)	10 (21%)	0 (0%)	11 (23%)	47 (100%)
Z	59 (70%)	16 (19%)	0 (0%)	9 (11%)	84 (100%)
Total	145 (68%)	30 (14%)	1 (0.5%)	38 (18%)	214 (100%)

Number of counties in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 10
Number of villages in Northern Rhodesia under Mpezeni 540 approximately

It will be seen from Table IV that about two-thirds of the villages in each of the selected counties belong to their own county segment. It is to villages in this category that the ties of a county chief are strongest. Here old and new systems are in accord and the chief acts both as traditional lord of the segment as well as head of the Native Authority. Villages in their county segment appear to be

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more meticulous than others in such matters as discussing proposed changes of site with the county chief and in reporting important deaths to him.

The proportion of villages in each county belonging to other segments under Mpezeni varies from 5 per cent to 21 per cent. These are villages which chose, or were forced, to move away from the chief to whom they were attached in segmentary terms, or else villages belonging to major segments whose lords did not become chiefs. Villages in this category have ties that in certain situations, as when there is a serious quarrel, link them more closely with some other county than with their own. In any county where there are many villages of this kind the solidarity of the county as a social group is not great. The ruling chief has many rivals who seek to divide his county and to become chiefs themselves. We must distinguish here between villages in one county which belong to the segment of another and those interloping villages which belong to one county but are situated in the territory of another. We shall discuss interloping villages later (p. 128) in connexion with the territorial aspect of counties.

In Nyasaland the history of administration has been separate from that of Northern Rhodesia, but the Ngoni population there also has divided itself on segmentary lines. For many years the two principal leaders recognized by the Administration have been the heads of segments 5 and 6, and these segments form the cores of the two counties they control. The two county chiefs are now Native Authorities and join with an adjacent Cewa chief to form the Fort Manning Council of Chiefs. This acts as the Native administrative body for the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District.

The geographical distribution of the twelve counties, the neighbouring chiefdoms of other tribes, and the tracts of alienated land are shown in Map D.

The twelve county segments, ten in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, are, in the nomenclature of Chapter I, segments 4 to 6 and 9 to 13. We shall refer to counties in the same way by the numbers of the segments corresponding to them. Thus county 4 is the county whose segment is number 4, and so on. County 10 is the Paramount Chief's county. Some of the county segments are primal, others are residual segments left after the formation of primal segments of lower order. The definition of the segment associated with each county is indicated in Table V. This table merely contains information implicit in Diagram 1. The hereditary names of county chiefs are also given.

[Text continues on page 121]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5 Mpezeni

Map D. STATUTORY DIVISION OF LAND, FORT JAMIESON 1949

[p. 120]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TABLE V. COUNTY SEGMENTS

County[1]	Specification of county segment	Hereditary name of county chief
4	Residual after formation of segments 9 to 12	Madzimawe
5	Primal	Zulu
6	Primal	Mlonyeni
7	Primal	Mzukwa
10(a)	Residual after formation of segments 13 to 15	Mpezeni
11	Residual after formation of segment 16	Mabolo
12	Primal	Mahawa
13	Primal	Kapatamoyo
14	Residual after formation of segment 17	Nzermane
15	Primal	Sayili
16	Primal	Teleka (b)
17	Primal	Maguya

(a) Paramount Chief's county.
(b) The first chief of this county was known as Mlonyeni. He was succeeded by his brother, who kept his own name of Teleka. The similarity of name with the chief of segment 6 was accidental.

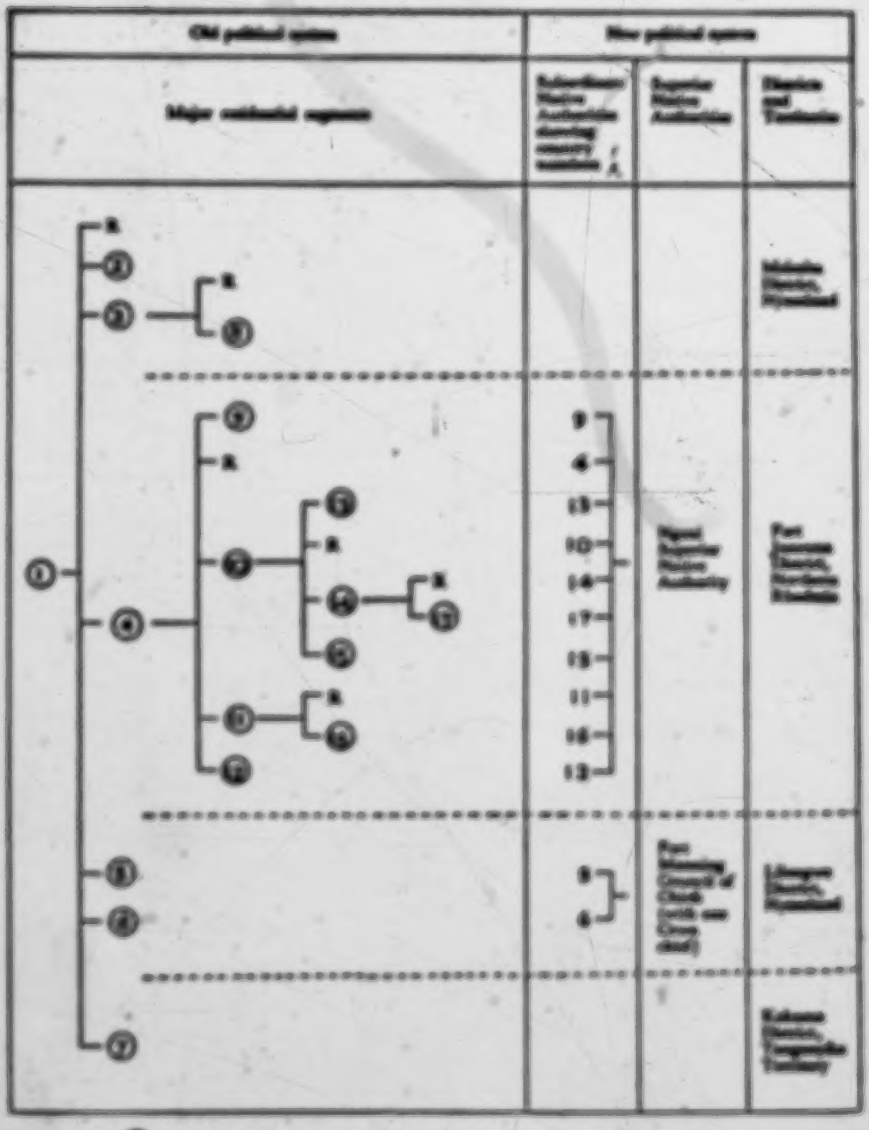
[1 County numbers refer to map on page 120, Lubwe'ville-Analysis]

The county segments are not all of the same order of segmentation, yet the counties occupy positions of equivalence in the Native Authority. Each of the eleven counties under minor chiefs is, or has been for most of the time, the area under the control of a Subordinate Native Authority and also the area of jurisdiction of a second-class Native Court. According to the *Official Gazette* the Paramount Chief's county appears not to have been under any Subordinate Native Authority, nor does it seem to have been provided with a second-class court, but in some respects action takes place as if there were such an authority and court. The Superior Native Authority is responsible for all ten counties in Northern Rhodesia and there is a first-class Native Court for the same area. Thus the structural alignment of the twelve counties is markedly different from that of the segments corresponding to them. In practice the relations existing between the twelve counties and

[Text continues on page 123]

611
621
631

Diagram 4. OLD AND NEW POLITICAL SYSTEMS RELATED



① Residential segment, numbered as in Table II.

9 County.

R. Residential segment.

1/ [County numbers correspond to those on map on page 120 category 116.-Analyst]

[p. 122]

[The units in this chart are on page 123.-Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

between their leaders are influenced by both their relative positions in the Native Authority scheme and the position of the county segments, as well as by new interests that have emerged. The formal relationship between the alignments of segments and counties is set out in Diagram 4. This diagram also shows the relationship, at a higher level, between some of the other independent Ngoni groups and the major political divisions of British Africa.

In each county the chief, who does not live in the capital but in a village of his own, is head of the county segment and it seems probable that during the early years of the Administration it was the affiliation of villages within their old residential segments that provided the basis for the groupings of convenience which eventually crystallised into counties. In one or two instances succession to headship of the segment and county has been plainly manipulated, but the traditional rules of succession have not been outraged. Where the county segment is a residual one, the county chief may be also head of some segment of higher order. Thus the chief of county 11 is head of primal segment 11 although his county is only the residual segment after the formation of segment 16; county chief 14 is head of primal segment 14; and the Paramount Chief is head of primal segments 4 and 10.

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[1] These Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba are not shown on this diagram.

(a) A group under Magodi separated itself from either segment 2 or 3 and is now settled in Lundazi District, Northern Rhodesia.

(b) A group led by Zulu Gama is now settled in Songea District, Tanganyika Territory. The segment corresponding to this group appears to have been formed within segment 1, but I do not know what relation it bears to the other segments nor by what process it was formed. The western part of this group is still led by a descendant of Zulu Gama, but a descendant of one of his associates named Mbunzani now leads the eastern part.

(c) A group under Chombe withdrew is settled in Dowa District, Nyasaland. Some writers say it was formed within segment 4, others within the residue of segment 1. He was a lieutenant of either Zwangendaba or Mpezeni.

The two Ngoni groups which do not stem from Zwangendaba cannot be fitted into the diagram. They are located as follows.

(d) The Southern Nyasaland Ngoni, who broke away from the Southern Rhodesia Ndebele and who were led originally by Mpezu, are now settled in Ncheu and Dedza Districts, Nyasaland, and in Circumscricão of Angónia, District of Tete, Portuguese East Africa.

(e) The Ngoni group led by Soshangane are now settled in the lower Limpopo Valley, Gazaland, Portuguese East Africa.

There are a few small Ngoni groups in the Shire Valley, Nyasaland, some of which have their own minor chiefs. There are also many Ngoni men and women in the towns of southern and eastern Africa, but they are not organised into political groups on a tribal basis.

[These notes refer to the chart on page 122 - Analyst]

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

3. *Relative status of Chiefs*

There was nothing inherent in the residential system which facilitated the emergence of twelve, and only twelve, counties from Mpezeni's people. Each major segment already had a large number of lesser segments within it in 1898, and it was during the unsettled years that followed the conquest, when new schemes of organization were tried out, when fresh occupants were sought for existing posts, and when the spatial distribution of people was being radically altered, that these twelve gradually emerged. Considerations of size do not seem to have been very important, for there is a wide variation in the size of counties. However, with the development of the Native Authority and Native Court, there is an upper limit to the size of the county which can be served adequately by a single court and possibly by a single minor chief, and this shows itself in the moves towards forming sub-counties within one or two of the larger ones. Yet in view of administrative attempts to do away with certain chiefs, it seems that in its eyes the Ngoni have too many rather than too few chiefs. The order of segmentation is not critical, as we have seen. Nor has there been merely an ossification of the formal structure as it was at the moment of conquest, as is often the case when a fluid society is suddenly put into a rigid mould. Wiese in 1891 wrote that Nguniland was divided into four districts.[20] In our terms, these were as follows:

(*a*) Primal segment 11.
(*b*) Primal segment 14.
(*c*) Residual segment 10 after 14 was formed.
(*d*) Residual segment 4 after 10 and 11 were formed.

Of these four districts, the first has given rise to two counties, 11 and 16; the second to two, 14 and 17; the third to three, 10, 13 and 15; and the fourth to three, 4, 9 and 12. Wiese does not indicate in what districts he would place segments 5 and 6.

The fortuitous manner in which the counties have emerged is illustrated by the fact that for certain purposes one of the counties is treated as if it were two. At one time, when there were more administrative divisions than there are now, it was divided into two areas, and this arrangement still persists for tax collection. Other counties have only one tax register book each, but this one has two.

In genealogical terms also, the emergence of the twelve chiefs appears to have been fortuitous. For example, the second wife of Mpezeni I in segment 10, after the formation of segments 14 and 15.

[20] Wiese, 'Expedition', pp. 469-70.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

had one son who died unmarried. The heir of Mpezeni I next after Naingu was, therefore, the eldest son of the third wife in segment 10. This man's position in segment 10 was, therefore, equivalent to that of the eldest son of the second wife in segment 14, who was the second heir in that segment. Of these two second heirs, the latter, in the less important segment, was able to establish himself as the chief of county 17 whereas the former, in the more important segment, succeeded merely in becoming a village headman. Similarly, some lieutenants managed to become chiefs, others of comparable status did not. Wiese mentions six lieutenants by name. One of these became a chief, the other five did not. The segments of two other lieutenants, not mentioned by Wiese, became county segments and one other lieutenant became chief in the county of his lady's segment.

The evidence, therefore, suggests that we must look upon this transition from one system to another as no simple procedure by which indigenous forms of organization are taken over largely unchanged by a colonial administration. The change from an isolated expanding system based on warfare to a large-scale quasi-static system based on subsistence production and migratory labour provided opportunities for advancement for those who could adapt themselves more quickly than their neighbours. In one sense the really significant change came not in 1898 but in the 1920s, when the pattern of alignment became fixed. In the intervening period Ngoni society was still fluid, and an ambitious man had hope of securing advancement even as he had in the old days before the conquest, even though that advancement was achieved by different means and in a different context. It was after the twelve counties had been fixed, when it became clear that no more chiefs were to be made, that social mobility declined. With a rapidly changing external environment it was unlikely that this static condition would last, and with the growth of the Native Authority bureaucracy a new opening presented itself. Recently there are indications that further openings for the ambitious are being provided in the formation of parishes and in other schemes of rural development. But there are no new chiefs, even as there are no new plumed warriors for them to lead in battle or on whose behalf they can intercede with the tribal ancestors. Leadership in a society of half-peasants, half-proletarians, is based on other interests.

The salaries of chiefs are determined at an annual budget meeting held by the District Officer and attended by the chiefs and a few other men. The general outline of the tribal budget is suggested by the Administration, but on items of interest, such as

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

paid more than 17, as befits the fact that segment 14 contains segment 17, and similarly 11 is paid more than 16.

From another point of view we see that the sizes of the counties, in terms of the number of villages, are in accord with the segmentary alignment, although here we have to remember that we are dealing not with the county segments, residual or primal, but with the counties themselves, each containing villages from many segments. Yet despite this complication, it remains true that the status of a chief, as measured by the number of villages he controls, is in conformity with his position in the segmentary residential system. It may well be that during the early administrative period fortune favoured those leaders whose *de facto* following was in agreement with their position in the old political system. The use of hereditary names emphasizes the connexion of the minor chiefs of to-day with the pre-conquest State and to some extent reflects their traditional alignment. Apart from county 16, where the hereditary name changed when a chief was succeeded by his brother, all the hereditary names refer to the first holders of the chieftainship, though not necessarily to the first leader of the county segment. Thus, for example, segment 5 was founded by Lomapela, brother of Zwangendaba. When the British Administration began, segment 5 was led by Zulu, a son's son of Lomapela. Zulu was recognized as a chief by the Administration, and the name Zulu has been adopted by the two chiefs, his sons, who have succeeded in turn. Similarly, segment 15 was founded for the lady Kukuya Kupili twala, a wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I. Her eldest son, Sayili, was recognized by the Administration as a chief, and this name has been inherited by his son and son's son who have succeeded him as county chief.

We should not infer from the conformity between the position of chiefs in modern and traditional terms that the present system is maintained solely by values surviving from before the conquest. This is plainly not the case. Our point here is that in this particular respect traditional values do not clash with those of the new order.

6. *Counties as territorial units*

We have seen that during the period of migration there were no lasting boundaries, and that political allegiance outlasted changes in geographical location. This state of affairs continued for some time after the conquest. The moves that were made were much shorter than in previous times, but the same principle applied. From 1900 to 1930 many villages moved from one site to another as land was alienated to Whites, as the boundaries of proposed

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

631 reserves were amended, and as existing gardens were exhausted.
634 Movement of this kind did not greatly affect political allegiance, so
178 that not all the villages acknowledging the control of a minor chief were built in his vicinity. Coxhead mentions seven defined territorial units in 1914, but by the time I began fieldwork in 1946 their boundaries had been forgotten.[1] Most of the villages in any one county were clustered together, with the capital village and the chief's village somewhere in the middle of the cluster, but there were also more distant villages situated among those belonging to other counties. The next stage of development appears to have been the definition of county boundaries, so that by 1946 it was possible to speak of some villages as situated in one county and owing allegiance to another. Most of these interloping villages, as we may call them, belonged to the segment of the county to which they owed allegiance. They were a bone of contention between chiefs, for although each chief desires as many villages as possible
[311] under his control, he has only a limited amount of land in his county with which to satisfy his people. An analogous situation is found in some Welsh sheep farms, where each farmer likes to own as many sheep as possible but hopes they will graze on someone else's land. The chief in political control of an interloping village endeavoured to maintain his control at a distance and at the same time to make use of the land in the local chief's county, while the latter had to decide between trying to make the interloping village shift its allegiance so as to increase his own following and trying to get it to move away so as to give his people more land. In 1947 and 1948,
[618] to avoid such difficulties between chiefs, the Administration defined county boundaries precisely and insisted that all villages within the area of a county should be under the control of the county chief.

631 Thus, in the development of the county as a social group, ties
634 of segmentary affiliation have been gradually replaced by those of
648 territorial propinquity. This replacement is not yet complete, nor
178 has it arisen merely as a consequence of Administrative action in the last few years. Village histories show that in many instances a village changed from attachment to the head of its major segment to attachment to the local county chief many years ago and without
[582] prompting from the Administration. Villagers marry their neighbours irrespective of county affiliation and thus build up ties which link them to the local county. It may be inconvenient to walk a long way to the court and county meetings of a distant chief, particularly if the local chief appears to listen more readily to his people's complaints and advice.

[1] Coxhead, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22, 24.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

agnation of the small segments to what I have termed an omni-directional system), has increased the importance of the single village. After 1898 the Administration endeavoured to bring the people back into villages of moderate size which could be easily supervised by the Administration acting through chiefs.[28] In 1910 a comprehensive scheme of Native reserves was proposed. To facilitate the introduction of the scheme, many small villages were amalgamated with others near by to form units of forty huts or more. The larger groups of composite villages were to form the nuclei of the reserves.[29] After 1930, when villages began to spread out again, many of the enforced amalgamations came to an end. The Administrative rules that every man must live in a recognised village and that a village with less than ten tax-paying men could not be recognised were not always enforced, although they were not repealed until 1945. Administrative recognition has been an important consideration in determining the size of villages but it has not been the only one.

In the residential system, the process of segmentation did not stop with the founding of the segments we now know as county segments. Already in 1898 there were very many more segments in being than the few we have shown in Diagram 1. There we have indicated the position of the major branches of the tree of State but have omitted the hundreds of minor limbs and thousands of twigs which made up the whole. Even if we restrict our attention to segments founded before 1898 we find within any county segment to-day many smaller groups, some of them divisions, others single villages, and a few containing several villages, which are in fact inferior segments formed by one or other of the processes we discussed in Chapter I. Lieutenants and others have made their own segments, junior sons have left their natal villages, and so on. The processes of segment formation since 1898 have not been identical with those prevailing before the conquest, for the quasi-agnatic structure of segments has been modified and segments of recent formation, if in fact we can legitimately call them segments at all, are not organized in the same hierarchical manner as in the old residential system. We shall discuss the formation of small social groups in a later part of our study, the analysis of village life. Here, at the county level, we have to deal with what is essentially a continuation of a pre-conquest process. Each successive head of a county segment, i.e. each county chief, has formed his own new segment within that of his predecessor. Thus, for instance, where

[28] *Reports on the Administration*, 1902, p. 2, and 1903, p. 2.
[29] *M.R.A.*, p. 108.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's village*, as I have defined them elsewhere.[36] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are resentful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[36] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 209-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 F'25 Ngoni F'25
Mpezeni

Apart from the fact that the head of the segment is, or once was, a member of the royal lineage, there is little difference between a cadet segment and a commoner one. The majority of segments in the system as a whole have been founded by commoners and the majority of extant villages are the headquarters of commoner segments. Before the conquest, one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring the spatial dispersal of an expanding population was the formation of new large villages, the headquarters of segments formed for bevies of queens. After the conquest a comparatively stationary population has dispersed not under the leadership of queens but by the formation of new segments by commoners, not all of them even lieutenants of their lords.

Some indication of the distribution of present-day villages among these various types is given in Table VII. This table is based on 80 village histories collected in the general course of fieldwork. The villages were selected casually and arbitrarily, without reference to this particular problem. I also collected the histories of several counties, in the course of which I became acquainted with other village histories. I have excluded these from the sample to avoid weighing it too heavily with capital and chief's villages, whose names are mentioned in county histories. In consequence, the sample contains no chief's village at all. It also contains too few villages that have come into Ngoniland from other tribal areas, as can be seen by comparing it with Table IV (p. 118). Nevertheless it should serve to show the rough orders of magnitude.

It will be seen that about four out of five at the present time are commoner villages, and that about half of these were already in existence as distinct villages in 1898. On the other hand, seven out of the nine royal villages in the sample were founded before 1898.

Apart from the six incoming villages and the two founded by a labour immigrant and Administrative action, all the villages in the sample have some segment of the old residential system, or its modern equivalent, as their core. Most of the commoner villages have been formed by the differentiation of a quasi-relative, cognatic or affinal relative from his lord. By contrast, most royal villages have been formed by differentiation between bevies of co-wives or between sons and their fathers.

In pre-conquest times there was a dogma that the chief owned all the cattle in the tribe. This dogma related to the structural position of the chief as head of the highest segment, and therefore in authority over the State and its resources rather than to the day-to-day care and disposal of cattle. There were cattle in each village

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and village headmen looked after them. About half the cattle in Ngoniland were captured during the fighting of 1898 and although many of these were returned to the Ngoni, they were soon disposed of to White traders. To-day, many of the cattle in royal (i.e. capital, regal and chief's) villages are said to belong to the Paramount Chief. This statement of royal ownership is now not merely one referring to political overlordship, for these beasts are contrasted with others which belong to commoners and to other chiefs

TABLE VII. VILLAGES FOUNDED BEFORE AND AFTER 1898

How founded or incorporated in the Ngoni State	*Type of present-day village*					
	Royal			*Cadet*	*Commoner*	*Total*
	Capital	*Regal*	*Chief's*			
Founded by regional governors or their successors prior to creation of the Ngoni State	0	0	0	0	3	3
Founded before 1898 to accommodate other segments of the residential system	1	6	0	1	15	23
Total known to have been founded before 1898	1	6	0	1	18	26
Founded to accommodate segments of the residential system, date unknown	0	0	0	1	11	12
Founded after 1898 to accommodate segments of the residential system or their modern equivalents	0	2	0	4	20	26
Founded outside the Ngoni State, date unknown, entering it after 1898	0	0	0	0	6	6
Founded in Ngoniland by a labour immigrant after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Founded by direct Administrative action after 1898	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total known to have been founded or incorporated after 1898	0	2	0	4	28	34
Grand total	1	8	0	6	67	82
Sample collected casually in the general course of fieldwork.						

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FRS Ngoni FRS
Mpezeni

and members of the royal lineage. Nevertheless, the care and disposal of these royal cattle is the responsibility of the head of each village where they are kept. If the Paramount Chief visits the village, and a beast is killed in his honour, it is the Paramount Chief who is praised as the owner of the beast. The nearer the village concerned to the Paramount Chief, geographically, in terms of segments, and in terms of counties, the more the man in charge of the cattle should refer to the Paramount Chief before killing one of them, or to report a loss by leopards or hyenas. A few years ago the son of the first lieutenant in a regal village in the Paramount Chief's county removed some royal cattle to another tribal area where he had kinsmen. When this was discovered the matter was discussed by the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief's county at his village, and the lieutenant and his son were ordered to be banished. A new man was made first lieutenant in the regal village. In this instance, the lieutenant showed plainly that he was not using the cattle in the interests of the chieftainship. Had his village been farther away from the Paramount Chief, or had his use of the cattle been less obviously merely to his own advantage, it is unlikely that such severe reprisals would have been taken.

These cattle do still provide a visible sign of the connexion between the headquarters of the various segments and the Paramount Chief, and they still provide the first lieutenants of the royal village with wealth which they can use at their discretion to further the interests of the chieftainship. The structural relationship between the Paramount Chief and his subordinates in the old segmentary system is still partly mediated through cattle.

In the old residential system each segment, however small, contained within itself the seeds of an independent State, for there was no inherent restriction on its growth. When the imposition of British rule modified this system, the effect of the ossification of the system at the top was to prevent further splits in the State. The relationship between the major segments which became counties was defined, or rather was redefined, in perpetuity within the bounds of a single Superior Native Authority. However, below the level of these segments no such process of definition took place. A county, in Administrative terms, consisted of so many villages, not of a system of nesting segments. The Administration did not perpetuate these lesser segments by adapting them to its own scheme, and inter-village and intra-county relations were largely left to find their own configuration. This has had three distinct results.

Firstly, present relations between pairs of villages are still formulated in traditional terms and in part still arise as a result of

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

guish them from their neighbours are no more significant than the many varieties of custom and belief which are to be found in every Ngoni village. They do not form a group among themselves, their members participate in all communal activities in their counties and are to be found at all levels of the Native Authority organization below that of chief. They are linked by kinship to their neighbours. The two Nyasaland counties, however, include relatively large areas where there are only Cewa-speaking villages, and many of these claim that they have been placed under Ngoni rule only by Administrative action. From time to time they have made efforts to break away and to attach themselves to some neighbouring Cewa chief or to establish a separate chiefdom. There appears to be a sharp distinction between the Ngoni chiefs, with the villages in their county segments, and their Cewa-speaking subjects. It will be remembered that the two Nyasaland chiefdoms represent the head of the eastern movement of Mpezeni's group, and that some of the settlement across the border took place as late as 1897. It is not surprising therefore that in these two counties assimilation of Cewa captives and immigrants has not proceeded so far as in the longer established counties in Northern Rhodesia.

11. *Conclusion*

In this study we have attempted to show what has happened in Ngoni political life during a period of 130 years. To-day Ngoni society is changing but this has not always been so. Prior to the arrival of Wiese in 1886, the actually existing social relations were changing, but the form of the social structure remained the same. Each new segment developed along lines that were already known and each time the State split, the new States were copies of the old. A system of this kind could not have lasted for long, for the supply of new recruits to the Ngoni States must have sooner or later been exhausted. In Africa, even if the overall conditions facilitated the emergence of this kind of migratory militarism, they were particularly unfavourable for its prolonged continuation. The Arabs and the European Powers behind them were closing in on the centre of Africa, and Ngoni days were numbered. Then came the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898 and the emergence of a new system, in which some of the actually existing political groups, and the relations between them, appear to have a much greater stability than before. But at the same time society as a whole has become much more diversified, the spatial distribution of men and women in significant relationship with one another has become highly complicated, and

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

new external factors are operating. There has been a change in the scale of social relationships, and Ngoni men and women form part of a large-scale society in which events in one distant part of the system affect events in another part. The history and analysis of this change lies largely outside the scope of this study, and we have restricted ourselves to the way in which the political system of the tribe has adapted itself and been adapted in the changing society. The Ngoni sovereign State has become more and more like a rural district council in a backward area; foreign policy has given place to Native policy; social mobility has been restricted to the lowest caste in a plural society; and the great warrior chief has become in effect the only member of the Administration who never goes home to Britain on leave. But in the eyes of his people, the Paramount Chief still belongs to the Ngoni, and not to the Administration.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1954
FRS Ngoni FRS

CHAPTER II

THE NGONI KINGDOMS

In 1935, by the Native Authorities Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance, Mbelwa was recognized as Paramount of the northern Ngoni kingdom with six Subordinate Native Authorities under him, and his court was constituted the appeal court for their six courts. The same procedure was followed in the central kingdom for Paramount Gomani with six Subordinate Native Authorities, and his court as the appeal court for their courts. They were the only rulers in Nyasaland with B.N.A.[1] under them. Two other chiefs, Cikulamayembe of the Henga in Mzimba district and Kyungu of the Ngonde in North Nyasa district, had respectively four and five courts subordinate to them, but the chiefs owning these courts were not recognized as their subordinates. The Ngoni comment on these ordinances was 'Ha! Now they are what big chiefs we have. Only our chiefs are called inkosi.'

The northern kingdom was in Mzimba district, and Paramount Mbelwa's royal village was at the southern end of his kingdom. The central kingdom included the whole of Ncheu district with Paramount Gomani's royal village at the northern end. This kingdom had Portuguese territory on its western frontier, close to the royal village. When the Portuguese boundary was fixed in 1891, the Ngoni kingdom under the Maseko Paramount was cut in two and a section under a Maseko ruler became a separate kingdom under the Portuguese. There was constant trouble in the 1930's over this Portuguese frontier, for Gomani's Ngoni visited their relatives, grazed their cattle and hoed gardens on the Portuguese side; and from time to time claims by the Portuguese for rent for gardens and grazing lands and disputes about taxation, needed judicious handling in the District Commissioner's court.

The figures in Table II for Mzimba and Ncheu districts in 1926, 1931, and 1945 show the changes in the ethnic composition of the districts, some of which are difficult to account for. In Mzimba district the Henga under Cikulamayembe were included in the figures for the Tumbuka and hence the northern Ngoni kingdom did not include all the 156,208 in the district. In Ncheu, the total district population of 87,690 were all included in the central Ngoni kingdom, showing the mixed ethnic elements, among which the Ngoni, or those who were enumerated as Ngoni, had declined from 64,023 in 1926 to 15,242 in 1945. Between 1931 and 1945 the decrease in the number of Ngoni (31,066) was almost balanced by the increase in the number of Nyanja

[1] This abbreviation will be used henceforward in referring to Subordinate Native Authorities.

2: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1956
FRS Ngoni FRS

(35,107). It is difficult not to assume that many Nyanja had formerly called themselves Ngoni.

Table II

	1926	1931	1945
Mzimba district			
Ngoni	23,484	29,627	44,048
Tumbuka	46,029	58,483	89,135
Cewa	14,041	2,411	21,891
Yao	20	—	—
Tonga	3,052	605	32
Nkonde	141	—	—
Others	334	196	202
Total	89,101	106,282	156,308
Nkhota district			
Ngoni	64,023	46,308	13,242
Cewa	11	4,378	2,815
Nyanja	334	25,393	60,400
Chikunda	360	940	1,336
Yao	203	1,064	3,267
Nguru, etc.	—	—	4,448
Others	13	278	182
Total	64,944	78,333	87,690

Since the two Ngoni kingdoms are the subject of this book and not the secession states, the position of the rulers of those states as Native Authorities and the circumstances of their secession from the two main groups will not be examined here. The three secession states in the north were under Chiefs Ciwere and Maskambewa in Dowa district and Jere in Kotakota district. The four connected formerly with the central Ngoni were under Chiefs Kacere and Kacindamoto in Dedza, Masula in Lilongwe and Vumbwe in Cholo.

In the 1930's, when I was living sometimes in the northern kingdom, sometimes in the central, and for a time in the Ngoni state under Chief Jere, I was aware that the existence of the two kingdoms and of the seven secession states did not preclude a great deal of contact between the Ngoni of the different areas. The stream of travel in Nyasaland from south to north and from north to south along the one trunk road, brought Ngoni as visitors from one kingdom to the other, from the smaller states to both kingdoms, and from 'the Ngoni of the dispersion' living in towns to visit their relatives and friends in the Ngoni kingdoms and states. These visits might be social, to see parents or to marry a wife; they might be for economic purposes, to invest in or sell cattle, to supervise cotton or tobacco marketing; or they might be for ritual purposes such as mourning. When I travelled in the central Ngoni kingdom in 1936 with Y. M. Cibambo, the historian of the northern

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Ngoni, he was welcomed everywhere as one who could speak with authority about the culture and customs of his people, and the central Ngoni, when talking about their history and customs, wanted him to realise that they too were 'real Ngoni' (*Ngoni ooi ooi*). The general relationships before 1939 were that the political separation between the kingdoms and their secession states was accepted as final. On the social and cultural level, the Ngoni from one state sought contacts with the Ngoni from another state or kingdom in preference to contacts with other ethnic groups. In using the term Ngoni in this context, as throughout this book, I am referring to people with Swazi and trans-Zambezi clan descent names.

THE MAIN POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NGONI KINGDOMS

The District Commissioner of Ncheu in his report for 1935, after the Native Administration Ordinance had been in operation for over a year, wrote of the central Ngoni kingdom: 'The tribal system is, comparatively speaking, intact under a chief who commands universal respect.'[1] The political system of the Ngoni in both kingdoms was based on a ruling aristocracy in which the Paramount of the royal clan was the head, supported by influential members of his own clan and of other leading clans. There were three main elements in this ruling aristocracy: the Paramount, with whose office was linked provision for a regency at the death of the incumbent and during the minority of his successor; the subordinate chiefs who ruled under him in recognised areas; and the heads of Swazi clans called *alumuzana*. I shall use these terms, chiefs and *alumuzana*, when speaking of the Ngoni kingdoms. In the northern kingdom all six chiefs was of the royal clan. In the central kingdom none of the six chiefs were of the royal clan but, with one exception, all were recognised as *alumuzana*. This distribution of authority among the six chiefs under the Paramount in the northern kingdom meant that several of the leading *alumuzana* felt excluded from political control of the villages and area which they were said to 'own', because they had no recognised court. This led at times to friction between them and the chiefs of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the position was different, for though some *alumuzana* were recognised as chiefs, others were not, and friction occurred at times between the chiefs and other *alumuzana*, and also between the chiefs and members of the royal clan. In both areas allegiance to the Paramount was, however, a strong unifying element.

The ruling aristocracy was in its turn supported by a hierarchy of officials, some traditional, some appointed to meet modern requirements

[1] *Annual Report of the Provincial Commissioner for the Nyasaland Protectorate*, 1935, p. 54.

2: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1956
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in the political organization. Some of these officials were also members of Swazi and trans-Zambezi clans, but many were not. The officials served the Paramount in his court and his administration, and also the chiefs, and formed the lines of communication between them. This created a network of relationships between the Paramount and the chiefs at the top level, and between the chiefs and the village headmen under them at the lower level. From this network were excluded, in the northern kingdom, all the *abamnumzana* and, in the central kingdom, all those *abamnumzana* who were not chiefs. In the two kingdoms the *abamnumzana* exercised unofficial control over a varying number of villages, and were inclined to assert their social superiority because they were excluded from official recognition.

The foundations of the political structure within which the ruling aristocracy operated were a series of related institutions which will be described and analysed later in the book, but which must be referred to here, partly in order to explain the terminology used. The South-eastern Bantu, whose culture the Ngoni brought with them, had an institution in all important villages known as 'houses', which was a grouping of huts and of the wives owning them round the hut of one or more of the leading women. This institution, with its variations among the southern and northern Ngoni people, was described by Mrs. Hoernlé in the chapter on 'Social Organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*.[1] The Ngoni institution of houses had developed from the basic pattern among the South-eastern Bantu into an independent form. In the first place it was only found in relation to the Paramount, the chiefs and leading men of the royal clan, and the *abamnumzana*. It did not, as in South Africa, form the basic pattern of all villages in the Ngoni kingdoms. Where, as in most villages owned by *abamnumzana*, mixed ethnic groups lived together, the house system existed only for the head of the clan, his brothers and his successor. It was specifically an Ngoni institution in the cultural and social sense. In the second place, the terms 'right-hand' and 'left-hand' house, common among the South-eastern Bantu, were not used by the Ngoni in the 1930's. The two terms they used were the 'big house' and the '*gogo* house', and I propose to use these terms here. The principle behind the use of these terms was that the big house was the one from which the heir should come to succeed the Paramount, the chief, or the *mnumzana*. The *gogo* house was the one which was responsible for maintaining tradition and performing ritual.

Another institution, closely related to that of the houses, was the *lusengulu* and *gogo* villages. The Paramounts, the chiefs, and the leading *abamnumzana*, when they succeeded their father after his death, moved out of his village and made their own new village, or took their households

[1] Schapera, I. (ed.). *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*. Routledge, 1937, chap. IV.

2: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1956
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guardianship of his father's spirit, or she could take over the *inflinkulu* while a co-widow of the Queen Mother inherited the guardianship of the spirit in her own hut. The second alternative was the one followed in all the instances remembered by informants. In both kingdoms the spirits of the main line of the Paramounts were guarded by someone appointed to that task, chosen on the grounds of reputation and reliability. There was yet another variant in the central kingdom, where, as we have seen, it was Mangu, the daughter of Mpezu, who succeeded to her mother's guardianship of his spirit. The one principle which emerged from a number of cases cited in both kingdoms, was that occupancy of the *inflinkulu* and guardianship of a spirit might be undertaken by the same person, but generally it did not work out that way.

The Royal Sister, a title equivalent to the English Princess Royal, was the elder full sister of the Paramount by the same mother, or his elder sister by his father's big wife if she had borne no son. She was always referred to as 'the one who would have been chief if she had been a man'. She stood in a special relationship to the reigning Paramount and to the Paramount-elect. She was in constant touch with the Paramount's children who used the name *dadakazi* (female father) when addressing her or referring to her. Dr. Kuper [1] reported that the Royal Sister among the Swazi was addressed by the same term, and that she came next in rank to the big wife and the leading wives. My informants and my own observations in both Ngoni kingdoms put the Royal Sister next to the big wife and before the other wives. She visited the royal village at frequent intervals to see her brother and his children, and was consulted about their affairs. She took a leading part in the puberty ritual for the daughters of her brother and was prominent at *Ngoko* and other dances, and at mourning ceremonies. She was married with an exchange of cattle to a man of a leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clan, and during his lifetime lived in his village, visiting the royal village often.

The position of the royal women in the Ngoni kingdoms has been discussed in terms of the sister, mother and big wife of the Paramount. The same relationships were found in the families of the chiefs and sub-chiefs. There the equivalent of the Royal Sister was the elder full sister by the same mother of the chief or sub-chief, and his own big wife and his father's big wife played similar roles, within their own spheres, to those played in the Paramount's village by the Queen Mother and his big wife.

Five texts follow which illustrate the life and activities of leading women who filled roles equivalent to those of Royal Sister, big wife and Queen Mother. One of the texts is by a Royal Sister—Bambo Mangu, who was the sister of Paramount Cikusi in the central kingdom. Margaret Jere was the elder full sister of the heir to the chieftainship of

[1] Kuper, H. *op. cit.* p. 39.

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Chief Mtwalo II in the northern kingdom. Two texts are by former big wives of leading men. NyaNsanga was the former big wife of a grandson of Zwangendaba, a member of the royal clan but not a chief, though he owned many villages. NaNdambo was the former big wife of the head of the Nsanga clan in the central kingdom. The last text by Cibamba gives details of the clothes worn by royal women and leading women in pre-European days, some of which were still in use in the 1930's.

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Life of the Royal Women
by Mango Mumbo

daughter of Mjusu, former Paramount of the central kingdom

151 565 631 644 [302] [360]

¶ Formerly I was just staying for I did not work. I had many slaves and their work was especially to thread beads. Up to today I have not worked except to cook. Our hair was anointed with the fat of cows and of milk. Our food was milk and we drank it in a wooden cup. We were getting cloth when they sold slaves to the Arabs. For honouring each other, the big men were telling the youths: 'You should honour the big people that the country may be rich.' Only the big women were dancing *ngoma, mdudo* and *ligudo*. If a man married the *child of a chief*, he gave many cattle, and the poor man could not marry the *child of a chief*.

When NaMlangeni was alive she was a well-known chief and was greatly honoured. When speaking a case, they called her that she might judge. When people went to war and captured slaves and cattle they were giving them to her, and she divided them. For thanking her they said: '*Zaidawa Mai.*'

Life of the Royal Women
by Margaret Jere

granddaughter of Mtwalo I, daughter of Johanna Jere in the northern kingdom

¶ When I was a child I was not allowed to go out quickly in the sun, and when crawling I had to stay in the house. I was very light coloured. The *ndesi* (nurse girl) took me to my mother, UNwabasi Naima, to be suckled at special times. I slept in the house of Magedine Moyo, my grandmother, who was the widow of Chief Mtwalo. The *isidendesi* (attendant) also slept there. My grandmother and others, the *mamina* (senior women), were telling me how to behave. A special *isidendesi* living in Magedine's house was told by my grandmother to speak specially to me when I had reached puberty. This *isidendesi* could speak to me about anything. When nearing marriage a woman was chosen, Hannerya Naima, and sent to reveal to me how I was to live in my married state. The sisters of my father, Tinaiva and Seyeya Jere, also came and spoke to me at the time of my marriage. Hannerya Naima was sent by my grandmother to examine me (for virginity) before marriage. I was allowed to play with those children who lived in the same section of the village and who were known to my mother and grandmother. The *isidendesi* did all the work but sometimes I used to pound and fetch water, but not too hard and just for pleasure.

When strangers came, I came and saluted them and then went out of

2: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1956
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the house. If my father came to my mother's house, I would go out, but if he sent for me I would return and he would talk to me and play with me. We learned how to behave well, and were rebuked if we behaved badly. My father would beat a child for not behaving well. My father did not allow his children to be spoiled by being treated differently from others. He said: 'They are all my children.'

Life of the Royal Women

by Mdingane Nsanga

widow of Chirumbu Jere, grandson of Zwangendaba in the northern kingdom

The *amakosikazi* were not working. During the day they kept dressing their hair, both the young women and the old. The old women no longer kept their *isikhato*, or high chignon, but wore the *umazo*, or long curls. For the *umazo* the hair was cut short and not allowed to grow very long. Instead of dressing it afterwards they took a blade of grass and kept it pressed down after oil and scent were applied. Their other work was to go to the river and wash.

They also drank beer and some gruel, and afterwards danced *ngoma* in the house where beer was brewed. The men and chief also joined in the *ngoma* and the women were responding to the singing. They began to drink in the morning until the afternoon, but not in the evening. Other people went on drinking until evening, and even some of the *amakosikazi* who were *isidli* (gluttonous) but the rest were sleeping or resting.

When drinking in the house the chief always sat by the right-hand door-post, and the big *inkosikazi* by the left-hand post. They sat near the door to draw breath easily because there were many people inside. The beer-pot being set halfway between the door and the hearth-stones in the centre, a man was chosen to pour the beer in the gourds for drinking. He was *umtshi wamadolo*, the lesser power, and was often the village *induna* or one who was favoured by the chief. When the gourds were full he told the chief, and the chief told him to distribute them. Sometimes there were four or even six for the different classes in the house. They sat in order, the *inkosi* with the *isinduna* and *amadodo*, and the *inkosikazi* with the other wives of the chief and the wives of the *isinduna* and *amadodo*. The chief and the *inkosikazi* kept on inviting the common people to come and drink. Such invited people thanked the person at the beginning and at the end, others joining him. The *inkosikazi* or other wives of the chief were thanked '*Nkosazi*'.

The *amakosikazi* never worked at all, but the lesser wives worked, and pounded grain and fetched firewood. These were the ones who had not yet got attendants in their houses. All the chief *amakosikazi* had attendants who performed all the work of the house. The *amakosikazi* often sat in the verandah or outside under the platform of branches supported by posts. There they ate their food which was *ilambazi* and *umujinji*, thick gruel of millet; *isinkwa sa nyumi*, bulrush millet ground to a paste; or *isinkobe*, whole grains of maize boiled and pounded. The meat was eaten as a feast on the *nyakasi*, the unroofed place in front of the house, and all the chief's wives joined in. A mat was spread for the big *amakosikazi* where they sat

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when eating meat. The lesser wives sat on the ground, which was cleaned and smeared often with cow's dung.

The second *indoona* of the village was the one who put the meat on the *ingwenda*, or big platter of the *inhumbani*, and placed it before her. She herself or her *shikwai* (co-wife) divided the meat for the other women, the wife of the *indoona* helping her. After they had eaten, each *inhumbani* called for an *ingwenda* from her house for the meat to be given to her attendants.

The Life of the Royal Women
by NaNdumbu

formerly the big wife of the late Chief Njelemuzu Nwanga I in the central kingdom

I Old Njelemuzu had many wives, great and small. His huts were well made, and in the middle was the 'big house'. They made a fence to go round all the huts, and its appearance was very good.

He was fond of sitting on the *bundu*, and all his wives cooked mieso and took many baskets to the *bundu*. He himself ate alone, but afterwards gave food to the big people and they in turn to the children who were waiting on the *bundu*. If a stranger came, he did not lack food, for the chief gave food to strangers and beer. So all strangers praised his behaviour. And he was known far and wide in the land for his courtly behaviour.

When the days for *ngoma* were near he was going to the stores to buy many cloths to divide them to all his wives. Especially he was giving them to NaNdumbu his big wife to divide. Those cloths were all of one kind. On the day of dancing *ngoma* all the women wore those cloths and came on the *bundu* with the chief. The people were astonished to see the women dressed alike. Njelemuzu excelled among all the people, and all praised him.

In the hut of NaNdumbu there were girls to sweep and to ground, and NaNdumbu was just sitting, no pounding for her.

Njelemuzu was very fond of hunting and when he killed animals in the hunt he divided them among his wives. Then he died and left his wives. From that time his wives have been very poor, and some have gone away to their own homes. Those who are here have been married by other men. Although the men dance *ngoma*, those women cannot dance it because they were greatly praised when they danced with fine cloths, but they cannot dance with poor cloths, no. So when people dance they just look on. Those women can dance *ngoma* in other villages, but here in their own village, no. Because they grieve very much to see the tomb of their husband who was dancing with them.

The Clothing of Women
by Yesaya Cibembo

I Today Ngoni women are not easily recognised because they have taken foreign customs of clothing. Long ago Ngoni women were easily distinguished by their hair. They did not shave their hair except when their husband died. It was washed carefully and oiled and combed upwards to the top of the head in the *isikuta*. The oil was *ipuka*, clarified butter. This was done every two or three days, or every day if they were grand women. They decorated it with small strings of beads dangling from a

2: Read E-S (1935-1939) 1956
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boundaries of their own village, and they were afraid to travel even in a large party of twenty or thirty. So no one had any wisdom beyond that of his own village and family. When the Ngoni came they had one law for all people and they had courts to hear cases where this law was enforced. There was freedom to travel in the land where the Ngoni ruled, because they had peace within their boundaries. Therefore, we say: this was the kind of peace we had.

In these two texts we have one major concept of Ngoni law with three chief ways in which it was implemented. The concept was that there was 'one law for all people' and that the knowledge of and enforcement of this law brought internal peace and resulted in good government in the country. There was one source of law as there was one source of political and military authority—the Paramount. As Cibamba points out, the Paramount delegated his authority for carrying out the law to chiefs and headmen and depended on his 'old men and men of report' to keep him in touch with the thoughts and desires of all his subjects, so that he might adjust the enforcement of the law to bind the people to him. He also called large gatherings of all the chiefs and *akwasanse* and headmen in order that they might hear from him any new laws and regulations and understand them so that they in turn could make them known to their people. In the intervals between the holding of these large gatherings, which took place not more than once or twice a year, messengers passed constantly from the Paramount's village to all the areas of the chiefs and *akwasanse*, reporting to them about decisions taken at the royal village on matters affecting the country as a whole, and taking back reports to the Paramount on what was happening in the outlying districts.

I attended two of these annual meetings of the chiefs and *akwasanse* and headmen in the central kingdom. They took place not at the Paramount's village but at a more central spot for the whole territory. The people were drawn up in a square formation, with the Paramount at one end supported by his 'mouthpiece' (*mlomo wenkosi*), who always spoke for him, with the six Subordinate Native Authority chiefs beside him, and the councillors (*isinduna*) messengers and other officials of his court and of the S.N.A. courts arranged in order of precedence, facing the crowd as they did during court sessions. On the three sides of the square in the front ranks were the *akwasanse* and the headmen of their villages, sitting in territorial groups, and behind each headman were the *madoda* or senior men of the village, and behind them again the *amajuba* or young men. I watched this assembly of 3,000 to 4,000 people being arranged, as they arrived, by the *isinduna* of the Paramount's court and the *isinduna* of the six chiefs. They took up their places as though on a military parade, and once placed there was no further movement. The effect was that of a barrack square in the straightness of lines and orderliness of behaviour. After all was in order the Paramount

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631 643 692 645 arrived, and there were deep-throated shouts of '*Bayete*' until he sat in his chair. The proceedings were under complete control from beginning to end. After a brief introductory speech, delivered for the Paramount by his 'mouthpiece', the matters for the assembly were introduced one by one by the councillors of the Paramount and were spoken to first 'from the platform', that is from the group round the Paramount. Then it was open for any of the *ahumuzana* or headmen to speak 'from the floor'. They did so vigorously but respectfully, and there appeared to be no hesitation in putting forward views which were divergent from those expressed 'from the platform', and questions were asked with freedom.

The topics covered a wide range of subjects and dealt partly with matters sent on by the Administration and partly with the enforcement of regulations emanating from the Paramount for his area. A letter from [744] the health authorities about the incidence of bubonic plague in Southern Rhodesia was accompanied by an order to kill all rats and rabbits. Several headmen stood up and said they had heard by letter from men in the south about this. The Agricultural Department sent a notice exhorting men to take up gardens, and to go and settle and build villages below the escarpment where cotton and tobacco could be grown for sale. Those who went there as a group under a leader, so the notice said, would have that leader recognized as a headman. This drew a number of comments from the audience, some warmly supporting the scheme, others opposing it. The supporters welcomed the chance of earning money from cash crops and of having new headmen recognized in the new villages. The opposers repudiated the idea of setting up new villages. 'Why should we divide ourselves? We have our chiefs and our headmen. Let us stay together' was their theme, adding as a significant afterthought: 'If we go to those hot lands, our cattle will die'. The Paramount had introduced a marriage certificate for which a shilling had to [651 585] be paid at the chief's court when the marriage was registered. Very few shillings were coming in and the Paramount wanted to know why. A number of men leaped to their feet and wanted to speak, and the *izinduna* had to keep order by pointing to individuals: 'You, what are your words?' The gist of that discussion was that Christians had to pay a shilling to the mission for being married in church, and they wanted to know if they must pay another shilling to the Paramount. His verdict was that Christians would have to pay twice because it was his law that marriages must be registered in the courts. There was much talk among the audience during and after this discussion and the *izinduna* had to call for order several times.

Two well-received items on the agenda were that permission had been given by the Government for villagers living on the Portuguese [648] boundary to go and hoe gardens over the frontier. This use of lands over the frontier, both as grazing-grounds and as gardens, had been

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going on for years. The land was apparently unused by anyone on the Portuguese side of the boundary road, and the need for extra land for villagers living on the British side was urgent. The Portuguese authorities had been charging rent for the gardens, a shilling or so per small plot, which the Nyasaland men had paid after being threatened with confiscation of their crops. This prolonged struggle had tried everyone's temper and endurance, and when it was announced that it had been arranged that gardens might be hoed without payment, there was a great roar of applause. The *izinduna* gave them time to talk among themselves after this announcement, to work off pent-up feelings. The other popular item was that the Paramount would have his own agricultural show at Ncheu in the coming year. He had asked Government permission to hold it, which had been granted, and he had money in his treasury to pay the expenses. European officers would come and judge the exhibits and the best would be sent on to the all-Nyasaland show at Blantyre. This announcement was greeted with cheers, a number of questions were asked and much talk went on in the ranks.

This account of the Paramount's annual gathering illustrates several of the points made in the two texts quoted. It was the only formal occasion when the Paramount met as one body all those who bore authority in his territory under him. The kind of laws and regulations which were promulgated at these meetings were previously discussed by him with his officials and the chiefs, and their presence at his side, facing the assembly, made it clear to the people that the laws came from the Paramount and had the support of his subordinate chiefs. The freedom of discussion in the council gave anyone who had something to say the opportunity to stand up and say it. There was no sense of the business being put over quickly. The *izinduna* gave speakers time to express themselves, and allowed time to elapse for other speakers to get up. They were more lenient with the speakers at this meeting than they were with witnesses in the courts, and only once or twice in the sessions, which lasted six or seven hours, was a man addressed from the platform and told: 'Speak well that we may hear your words.'

This method of putting new laws and regulations before the people illustrated the concept of one law for all, and of one source of law-making within the territory, namely the Paramount, whom they saw before them as the centre of the group of chiefs and leaders. The procedure therefore gave strong support to the political structure, for it was only on the occasions of this assembly of all the Paramount's office-bearers that all those in authority could be seen together as an authority-wielding group, their relative importance being indicated by the order in which they sat. The procedure also gave support to the policy of political assimilation, for in that assembly of several thousand people, the great majority were not of trans-Zambesi clans, and therefore not acknowledged as Ngoni so far as tribal origin was concerned. They

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
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643 682 all their things. Even when the Paramount agreed that a man should be killed he ordered that all his possessions were to come to him, stock, slaves, wives and children. These were called *izizi zenkosi*, the things of the Paramount, and they were divided among the houses of the Paramount, and the master of the man killed got nothing. This was done to teach the fathers of the villages that they should not sentence their people to death because they coveted their goods or people. The Paramount taught them by taking all the belongings of the one killed and they got nothing. Of course the Paramount's and chiefs' villages grew quickly in this way. At the beginning the punishment for adultery and murder was death; in adultery both the man and the woman were killed. Beginning from the time of Mbelwa and Mtwalo the penalty for adultery has been changed. The man who did it was despoiled of his goods or paid compensation. The courts agreed that any man wronged by such adultery could go with a war-party to the village of the guilty man and take what he wanted, but not kill any person. The Paramount took no notice of such an affair.

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671 No account of the conduct of cases in Ngoni courts would be complete without reference to the popular interest in and support for the law. After a day in the courts the *izinduna* and the *amadoda* talked of almost nothing else. They went over and over the details of the cases, and recalled former cases of a similar kind and compared the judgements given. They criticized each other sharply for the handling of cases, and such criticism was taken well on the whole, as a contribution to the process of interpreting and enforcing the law rather than as a personal affront. The attendance of the public at the court sessions was encouraged so long as they observed due decorum. When talking broke out among the onlookers, the *induna* in charge bellowed 'Silence' in a voice of thunder. If a group of women continued to chatter and giggle after the *induna* had called for silence, he told them to go home. The interest in courts and cases extended to the play of children and to the [857] conduct by the boys of their own affairs in the *laweni* or boys' dormitory. I often saw the young son of a chief or *induna* organizing his playmates into a court and allocating roles to them and in his play imitating the voice and gestures of his father.

631

Ngoni office-bearers

622 645 [565] In Chapter II of Part I we stated that the main element in the Ngoni political system in the 1930's was a ruling aristocracy supported by a hierarchy of officials. In this chapter we shall first look at two texts, one by Cibambo on the northern kingdom and the other by a big *induna* in the central kingdom, explaining the relationship of the different office-bearers to the Paramount. We shall see how there were in effect two groups of office-bearers, one related to the territorial divisions of the kingdoms, and the other consisting of state or national officials and those connected with the royal village. There was no set of terms which could

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

be used exclusively for either group, and in fact there was considerable overlapping between them. 622 631

We begin with the text by Cibambo which emphasizes the hierarchy of office-bearers in the northern kingdom in pre-European days and illustrates the correlation between the courts and the political administration. 645

¶ The former government of the Ngoni was based on the following:

(1) Above all was the one called *Inkosi* or *UBaba*, because they thought of him as the father of the country, the head.

(2) After him came the *izinduna*. Sometimes these were two or perhaps four. These were very highly honoured and the Paramount feared them greatly: he called them *Bohaba* and their words had great weight with him. They were the ones who gave advice to the Paramount and if any grave matter arose he called them to hear what they thought. The Paramount in his village had also his old men who helped him with everything small that did not need to go to the *izinduna*. If there was word that the Paramount was meeting with the *izinduna* he first of all met with the old men and asked for advice to place before the *izinduna*. And these old men had the right to speak when the Paramount took counsel with the *izinduna*.

(3) After the *izinduna* came the *amakosana*, or lesser chiefs. These were perhaps the younger brothers of the ruling Paramount, and had their districts under him. They also had their *izinduna* and were responsible for their own districts. When the Paramount met with the *izinduna*, the *amakosana* were also there if it was considered fitting.

(4) Then there were the *alumuzana*. These were over villages or smaller districts. Their villages were called *amakanda* (heads) and they had power in their small districts to carry out the laws and they looked to the *izinduna* for instructions.

(5) Lastly the old men (*madoda*) who wore the head-ring (*cidlodlo*) but not all of them; only those who had good sense and understood the ways of the tribe. [888]

All these five divisions had their share in the government of the country. If there was a great court of justice, all these were to be found at it, and took part in the discussions. If fresh matter arose, or new laws, these delivered them to their villages. Also there were men called *amanxusa*, messengers. These were men chosen to run with messages from the Paramount to the *izinduna* or *amakosana*, to go with and return with news. Almost every village or little district had its chosen messengers. All the types (2), (3) and (4) had their messengers. When anything happened, the messenger in the village of the Paramount made a general proclamation and called the *amanxusa* together. When the *amanxusa* had heard the message they scattered throughout all the country. So in the districts and by this way news travelled very quickly. [203]

In the central kingdom one of the big *izinduna* explained the change in their system which occurred after crossing the Zambesi: 178 622 631

¶ When the Ngoni were coming from the south they chose lesser chiefs and *izinduna* from the *amakosana*, who were the Paramount's brothers, 645

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

178 622 631 645

sons of his father and of his father's brothers. These *amakosana* were honoured next to the Paramount. The *alumuzana* were for justice in the courts, and for being the 'ears of the Paramount' in all the country. The change was made by Mputa because he saw that if the *amakosana* were given power they claimed to be big chiefs themselves. Therefore he chose for the courts and for the leaders in war and for lesser chiefs the *alumuzana* and *izinduna* who were clever and whom they could trust.

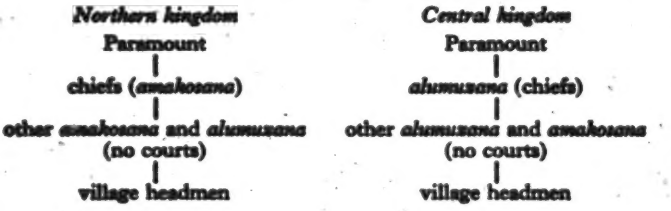
184 622 631 645 [698]

The diagram on p. 99 relates to the period between 1933 and 1939 and sets out first the officials in the territorial divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms from the Paramount to the headman of a village. In the northern kingdom only the Paramount and the six chiefs had recognized courts, the chiefs' courts operating for their districts and the Paramount's court for the whole kingdom. There were two sets of office-bearers who had no courts but who exercised authority over groups of villages. One group consisted of members of the Jere clan who were not recognized chiefs but were *amakosana*, literally 'children of the chief' but used as a rule for all members of the royal clan. Only certain *amakosana* had villages under them. The other group consisted of the heads of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans who owned several villages and sometimes had authority over a large area. Cibambo put this group below that of the chiefs, and other informants confirmed this as the pre-European pattern. But the informants also said that many of the powerful *alumuzana* formerly had their own courts and did not have to bring their cases to the chiefs' courts as they did in the 1930's. At the bottom of the territorial hierarchy came the headmen of single villages. In some cases the village headman had formerly been an *induna* in a large village which had broken up. Some were of the royal clan or of Swazi clans. The majority belonged to the local tribes and were owners of villages which were for the most part villages of one kinship group.

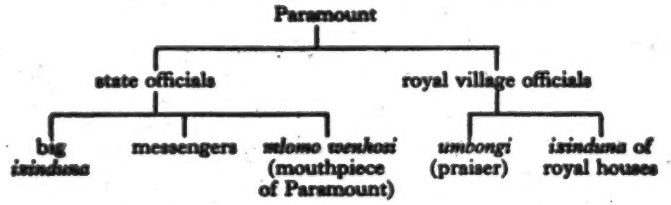
The text about the hierarchy in the central kingdom shows that a deliberate change had been made in the traditional pattern to avoid a struggle between the Paramount and his brothers when they had recognized positions as chiefs. The *alumuzana* who appear in the diagram as chiefs were the six who were recognized in 1933 as Subordinate Native Authorities. There were other *alumuzana* who were not so recognized, and certain members of the royal clan, all of whom owned a number of villages but had to take their cases to the recognized courts. The division caused by setting up the Portuguese boundary in the 1890's left many of the leaders of the Maseko clan on the Portuguese side, with the result that the number of *amakosana* owning villages and taking any prominent part in the life of the kingdom was very small; and another large group of the Maseko clan were in Dedza district under Chief Kacindamoto. The majority of village headmen in the central kingdom were of local tribes, and their villages were as a rule much larger than those in the northern kingdom.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Ngoni territorial office-bearers.



Ngoni national office-bearers (both kingdoms)



In the description of the annual gathering in the central kingdom to discuss new regulations, reference was made to those on 'the platform' at one end of the great square. There the Paramount sat with his state officials, the big *izinduna*, the messengers, and his spokesman or mouthpiece. These have been called state officials in the diagram to distinguish them from the officials of the royal village. It is a distinction which is one of convenience rather than of importance. The Paramount's spokesman lived in the royal village, and the praiser often did not. But the spokesman appeared with the Paramount on all occasions in every part of his kingdom when he went visiting, whereas the official praiser only recited the praise-songs at ceremonies in the royal village.

The big *izinduna*, as Cibambo points out in his text, were very close to the Paramount, advising him on matters of state, and speaking to the cases in his court. The *izinduna* of the big house and of other houses in the royal village were not concerned with matters of state, but with day-to-day affairs in the village. Illustrations of their work will be given in the next chapter. The work of the messengers, described by Cibambo, was that of keeping close touch between the royal village and the chiefs. He describes also how each territorial office-bearer had his messengers to send out to the heads of the next group below his. By this use of messengers for intercommunication between officials, the *alumuzana* and *amakosana* who had no courts received messengers from the chief above them and sent out their own messengers to the villages which they owned.

The only group mentioned by Cibambo which is not included in the

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni buildings.

The tables which follow show the total population of three villages in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, including such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Huts	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
Northern kingdom									
Eswazini .	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Endindeni .	15	9	21	21	51	4	1	4	15
Eluhangeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	32
Central kingdom									
Cinkwita .	39	22	39	54	115	13	5	4	2
Mangozo .	60	41	65	78	184	9	18	2	4
Mcakhatha	122	71	112	68	251	30	16	14	12

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *lusungulu* and *gogo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *banja* was not found in the north.

The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in one case a *mukumuzana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central kingdom the chief man in one was a *mukumuzana*, in another a grandson of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

Households[1]

	Total	Leading clan
Northern Ngoniland		
Eswazini	23	15
Endindeni	15	12
Eluhangeni	37	21
Central Ngoniland		
Cinkwita	39	18
Mangoso	60	26
Mcakhatha	122	37

The proportion of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans in the central kingdom to the total population was lower than in the north. The figures given here, however, do not show the total number of persons of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, but only the households related on a kinship basis with the leading clan head.

Eswazini and Endindeni were both built in traditional Ngoni style in horse-shoe formation round a single kraal, with the *indlunkulu* at the head of the kraal, and a recognized right-hand and left-hand grouping. Eswazini had become the head village of the Sibande clan since its owner, Samson Sibande, on his father's death had gone out from his father's village and made this his *kusungulu* village. His big wife, of the royal clan, was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his mother, and there was another wife on the right and left hand. Of the older generation there was only one widow of his father, belonging to the same house as his mother. Of his generation there were five brothers, one of the same mother as Samson, and four sons of the surviving widow of his father. There was also the widow of a dead brother by the same mother. Two sisters of Samson were in the village, one married to the *induna* of his mother's house, whose family lived on the right-hand side of the kraal, and one a deserted widow who had returned to her brother's protection. All the village was one house, that of Samson's own mother.

Endindeni was a *gogo* village owned by Zibekere Makwakwa who was the son of a famous war *induna* and was of the *gogo* house of his father. His brother, who was the son of the big house, had moved out to his own village. The village was composed entirely of his family with the exception of an age mate with whom he had an *ubale* relationship, who lived with his two wives on the left-hand side of the kraal. Zibekere's big wife was in the *indlunkulu* to which she had succeeded on the death of his own mother, and his second wife was also of her house. Of the older generation there was one widow of his father, and one widow of his father's brother; of his own generation, one younger brother of the same mother. There were four sons of his big wife and two of his second

[1] In all six villages the total number of households included two or more *lomuzi*.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

353 592 [562] women's. For all ceremonies the men sat on the right side, and the women on the left, the place of honour for the leading man and woman being by the main door-posts. No young man or woman ever thought of sitting near them. The other place of significance lay between the fire and the back of the hut on the right-hand side; it was known as the [778] [769] 'place of the spirits', the 'ancestors' corner', where the baskets and spears and other ritual objects were kept which were used in the ancestral cult. Only the owner of the hut or those taking part in the ritual could approach this corner.

In this land, into the cultural pattern of Ngoni village and household life, the Ngoni children were born. In such villages and homes they passed their earlier years, and grew from boys and girls to young adults.

The Ngoni kingdoms

642 When the Ngoni made parts of Nyasaland their homeland they set up conquest states on the pattern which they had been familiar with in southern Africa. Where they settled, [721] they either conquered the local peoples who lived in that area, or accepted their submission. Until the British ad- [648] ministration was established the Ngoni carried on wars and raids against neighbouring peoples to enlarge the boundaries of their kingdoms. As a conquest state, similar to that of the [162] Ndebele in Southern Rhodesia, the population of the Ngoni kingdoms was of mixed origin, some whose ancestors came from Natal, some from the territories passed through on their northward march, and some from Nyasaland itself.

[643] The kingdoms were organized on a centralized pattern with the Paramount Chief as supreme ruler and subordinate chiefs under him. The Ngoni code of law operated in the [671] [692] courts of the chiefs, and, as they proudly said, 'there was one law for all people'. Military service was required from [702] all young men, and each territorial chief had to bring his [631] quota of warriors to the Paramount's village when a war summons went out. Military service, obedience to the law,

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3:Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

186 563 621 in the village, whom they regarded as inferior not only because they had been conquered, but because they disliked and despised their way of living. This sense of separateness from and of superiority to the non-Ngoni elements in the villages had its counterpart in the close ties which existed with Ngoni families in other villages. These ties were reinforced socially by 'dynastic' or inter-clan marriages, and politically through the hierarchy of courts and officials leading up to the Paramount's court and entourage.

[582] [631] 565 621 [183] [177] The Ngoni aristocracy endeavoured to maintain their traditional ways of living and of bringing up their children in the face of changes creeping in from the non-Ngoni elements in the village, as well as from external European influences. The maintenance of Ngoni ways of living and cultural patterns of behaviour depended on three main elements in village society. One was the degree of integration between the Ngoni men in their house groups and in village society as a whole. This was most evident in chiefs' villages, and in the villages belonging to the heads of clans. The second element was the number of wives of true Ngoni families who had married into the village, thus combining the influence of husband and wife, or rather of father and mother, in bringing up children on the Ngoni pattern. The third element was the number and influence of senior women of Ngoni families, either wives of older men in the village, or widows of former leaders. This senior women's group, many of whom were addressed as 'mother' by the Ngoni fathers of young families, were a formidable force in maintaining tradition, by advising their sons, coercing their daughters-in-law, and holding on to their authority at every stage of the children's development.

[562] [593] [606]

Life in two Ngoni villages

121 [114] I am going briefly to sketch in, as a general background for the following chapters, the main features of two villages, in one of which I lived for several months, in the other for a few weeks.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

of this book, especially Chapters IV and V will show how the organization of Ngoni society and the cultural way of living in it, necessarily surrounded the life of children and the training given to them with a much wider horizon. We shall talk about the family, the household, the village as the setting of Ngoni child life, but these terms have to be interpreted according to the Ngoni social organization, sketched very briefly in Chapter I and set out at length in my earlier book *The Ngoni of Nyasaland*. Looked at from another angle, we can see that a young child's horizon in Ngoni villages was limited at first to what he saw around him and the people who had daily or frequent contact with him and who understood and supplied his daily needs. But that circle of people forming a young child's contacts was from the beginning much wider than the individual family which a child was born into. When he began to run about and to pass beyond the restricted confines of the household, it was as we shall see, the duty and responsibility of all Ngoni adults to notice his behaviour and correct him when necessary.

The relationships inside the large Ngoni families, between one family and another in a Ngoni village, with related families in other villages, with all members of the same clan living in an area—these were threads in the web of kinship and clanship which united the Ngoni people. These threads were also inseparable from the political links between the people and their territorial chief, and between the whole people and the Paramount, the head of the kingdom. The difference, however, between the Ngoni kingdom under the Paramount which included all his subjects of Ngoni and non-Ngoni ethnic groups, and the Ngoni aristocracy in the villages was a profound difference. It was the latter who understood, appreciated and sought to hand on to their children Ngoni ways of living based on Ngoni values. Hence in most villages there were sharp distinctions between standards of behaviour within Ngoni families and in non-Ngoni families.

4: Barnes
631

FR5 Ngoni FR5

[Category 631 has been applied in a special sense, namely to cover Barnes' concept of "residential system" as defined on page 1 of the text. Thus it refers not only to political organization, but also to the entire hierarchy of spatially defined social groups.]

that despite the vicissitudes of history there is some unbroken but continually changing system of social relationships which we may call Ngoni social structure, and that there is therefore some point in comparing Ngoni marriage in the 1890's with Ngoni marriage to-day; and on the other hand may prepare the way for a broader analysis of Ngoni kinship, of which marriage is one part.

The Fort Jameson Ngoni, with whom alone we are concerned in this paper, differ considerably from the other Ngoni groups in Africa and there is evidence that there are differences in marriage arrangements even from the nearby groups in Northern and Southern Nyasaland. The Fort Jameson Ngoni, numbering about 85,000[1] live in the Fort Jameson District of Northern Rhodesia and in the Fort Manning division of Lilongwe District of Nyasaland. Their country stretches from 13°25'S to 14°S latitude and from 32°10'E to 35°15'E longitude. Like other Ngoni groups they have a history of migration from Natal at the time of the rise of the Zulu under Shaka in the 1820's. They arrived at their present abode in about 1870 and were conquered by British troops in 1898. The leader of the group was Mpezeni I, and the present Paramount Chief, Mpezeni III, is his son's son's son. There are ten county chieftainships in Northern Rhodesia and two in Nyasaland, and each chief has his own court. The people live by subsistence cultivation, with maize as the main crop. A little maize and some cattle are sold to the local European-owned tobacco farms and in the township of Fort Jameson, but the principal source of money income is work on the farms or at the urban centres of Southern Rhodesia and the railway line of Northern Rhodesia. Many women and almost all men have been to Southern Rhodesia at some time or other[1].

[1] For an outline account of the social structure of this group, see Barnes, 'The Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 194 - 252 in Elizabeth Colson and Max Gluckman, eds., *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, London, Oxford University Press, 1951.

[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him. Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions, villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance. The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters, a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 68.

[2] *Cigawa*, pl. *vigawa*, from *ku-gawa*, to divide.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Succession to office within this system was from a man to his eldest son by his great wife. A man inherited from his father not only his father's dependents but also his father's political superiors. The segments of the system, although some of them had special names, could all be referred to by the name of the person in charge of each segment. The heir succeeded to the name of his father and to responsibility for the segment named after his father. New people came into the system in two ways: by birth and by capture. Captives were placed in the system by decree of the Paramount Chief and his regional governors. The function of marriage was, in this context, to locate children in the system unambiguously and uniquely.

Two systems of relationships set up ties which cut across the lines of the residential system. These were the military regimental system of age-sets and the bilateral kinship system. In this paper we shall be concerned only incidentally with the regimental system, in so far as it directly affected marriage. We are, however, concerned with the kinship system, and in particular with the relationship of husband and wife. By careful choice of wives for himself and his sons a man ensured that his own group of agnates was linked to many other agnatic groups by bonds of affinity and, in the next generation, of matrilateral kinship.

It is from this point of view that we can best approach the analysis of marriage as it was in 'the time of peace'. Marriage arrangements then worked in conjunction with the residential system which is now in decay and it is not surprising that the replacement of the old system by a new one has been accompanied by changes in the kinds of marriage entered into by Ngoni men and women.

2. *Fidelity and fertility*

The old Ngoni residential system had much in common with the Zulu and Swazi systems and there was much in common in the realm of marriage. Marriage involved a permanent transfer of the fertility of the woman to the man's group. The children of a man's wife fell entirely within his own segment of the system, so that political ties became coincident with lineage ties. But while marriage secured for a man legitimate descendents with whom to people his own segment, it also established ties of affection and obligation which cut across the cleavage lines of the residential system. A man and his affines were linked in a specific relationship, entailing definite rights in division in the marriage, validated by the transfer of cattle and made permanent by the birth of children. The rites of marriage affirmed the transfer of the woman's fertility, the agnatic affiliation of her children, and the rights and obligations of affines towards one another. This pattern is common to many peoples organized patrilineally. Nevertheless, some of the characteristics of highly developed agnatic systems, such as ghost marriage, the marriage of wives by a woman, and the marriage of a queen with cattle contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return of the children to their pater's kinsmen.

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers while retaining a common allegience to him.

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent and succession were traced through males, the pattern of segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetuated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from them.

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

855 593 sent their children to one of the senior wives of their captor. Husband, wife, and unweaned child slept together in the same hut, but their waking lives were spent in association with other and different groups of people.

631 554 591 In view of what has happened in modern times, we must draw attention to two features of the residential system which were not, at that time, directly related to the processes of marriage. A man lived where he belonged politically, and the residential system was an integral part of the political organization of the state. A man's place in it was determined by birth, and could not be altered except by the intervention of his political superiors. He could not change his political affiliation merely by going to live in another village or division or cluster, while if he received political promotion, or if his segment was punished by the State, the change of status was sometimes accompanied by change of residence. Secondly, choice within the system was expressed by hiving-off, not by moving about. The variable factor within any segment was the extent to which the potential cleavages within it were made actual cleavages. A man decided whether he would continue to live in the same cluster or division as his elder brother and depend on the common herd, or whether he would establish his own cluster with its own herd and own spatial identity. He did not have to decide whether he would continue to attach himself to one lieutenant or royal headquarters or whether he would transfer his allegiance to another. In this he had no choice. Choice lay in the extent of segmentation, not in the location of allegiance. We shall see that changes in these features [178] in the residential system have in recent times been related to changes in marriage.

581 613 Marriage in 'the time of peace' was essentially a means by which agnatic segments, unable by the fact of exogamy to produce their own children, were provided with child-bearers from outside the segment. A woman was associated as a child-bearer with a definite point in her husband's agnatic segment, and this association was permanent. The biological determinants of child-rearing strengthened the permanence of the association. To bear a child for her husband's agnatic segment, in any system of this general type, a woman must be associated with it for three years or more, from conception to weaning; and as one child is weaned, the next is on the way. One man can beget children for his agnatic line by many wives at the same time, but a woman can produce for only one husband at a time. Thus while it is possible to maintain stable exogamous matrilineal groupings without fixing permanently the [582] reproductive powers of men, agnatic exogamous groupings, if they are to persist in time, must be supplied with permanent sources of fertility from outside. The old Ngoni marriage system did this. [178] We shall see that nowadays both the permanent transfer of fertility and the persisting agnatic groupings have disappeared.

TRADITION AND PRESTIGE AMONG THE NGONI

MARGARET READ

I. THE NGONI PEOPLE. Before I made my first camp in an Ngoni village, many Europeans had said to me, 'There are practically no Ngoni left to-day. They are all hopelessly mixed with other tribes. None of them keep to the Ngoni customs any longer. Their chiefs are no good.' From the doorway of my hut I saw people coming all day long to the Paramount Chief, behaving towards him with profound respect, bringing him presents, working for him. His children formed a special group in the village, easily recognizable by their bearing and their manners. Old *indumas*[1] came to instruct me, as they had instructed chiefs in their day, on the duties of a ruler, and the code of Ngoni laws. Old warriors in war dress came and danced by the cattle kraal and sang praise songs. Courts were held with scrupulous regard for order and justice. Other chiefs came visiting from distant parts with their retinues, and were received ceremonially. It soon became apparent that here was the centre of a political state, whose head was invested with prestige and authority over a wide area, and where behaviour to the Paramount and to every one else was strictly regulated by custom, and as strictly observed. These were Ngoni, and they and their fellow Ngoni in other areas[1] for the next ten months introduced me to the Ngoni people. The European assertion, that they no longer existed as a people, they laughed at, and proceeded to demonstrate that the contrary was true.

The Ngoni are found to-day scattered over four East African territories. The largest groups are in Nyasaland in the districts of Mzimba, Dowa, Fort Manning, Dedza, and Ncheu. In Northern Rhodesia they are in the Fort Jameson and Lundazi districts bordering on Nyasaland. Another section is in Portuguese East Africa on the South-West border of Nyasaland. Under other names there are Ngoni settlements in Tanganyika Territory. The present divisions of the Ngoni are due partly to European frontiers, partly to the fact that more than

[1] According to the census returns there are about 80,000 Ngoni in Northern Rhodesia and nearly 250,000 in Nyasaland, with other groups in Tanganyika Territory and Portuguese East Africa.

[1] [i.e., military leaders.—Analyst]

9: Read E-5 (1935) 1936 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Stated very briefly, the problem is this: an Ngoni aristocratic minority created an Ngoni 'state' of mixed ethnic units, imposed a national identity on all who formed part of it, and inspired a real 'national feeling' among those who were assimilated. In this article I propose to look at this problem as it exists to-day in the light of white contact, and more particularly as a prelude to Indirect Rule. My thesis is that Ngoni 'national feeling' is based on the traditions of their past—on the story of their southern origin, their trek from the south, and their settlement in their present areas. I shall show how the continued preservation of their distinctive institutions, together with their strong historical sense, gave them a dominant position in the country, which was enforced through their military and political supremacy. This supremacy was first challenged and then overthrown by the arrival of the Europeans and the defeat of the Ngoni military power. The situation thus created is the key to the Ngoni attitude towards white contact to-day.

The plan of work which I adopted at the beginning had as its aim the establishing of certain essential data—namely, to determine the principles of local or territorial settlement in relation to the political organization and the ethnic constitution of the area. This involved making maps of the Paramount Chief's 'country' and of the 'countries' of his subordinate chiefs, showing the areas over which individuals exercised authority and their relation to those above and below them in the political hierarchy. It also involved making a number of village plans, showing the alignment of houses on the village site, the names and clans of the inhabitants and their mutual relations in terms of kinship groups and village organization.[1] In villages called Ngoni villages, that is, where the 'owner' of the village was of a recognized Ngoni clan and where there was a nucleus of Ngoni clansmen, the individuals in Ngoni clans numbered from 25–75 per cent. of the total inhabitants, the average being about 45 per cent. In a number of the villages where no Ngoni clans were represented, the villagers nevertheless asserted, 'We are Ngoni, because we are the

[1] This collecting of village plans was viewed with some suspicion at first as a new way of helping the Government to catch tax defaulters. However, when I promised the Paramount Chief that no one in the locality should see the village plans, he sent out word that I was to be given all the information I needed, and no one need fear the consequences.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
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84° F. and the mean minimum 61·5° F.[1] Three seasons are distinguished: the wet season, from the beginning of November until about April; the cold season, from May until July; and the hot season, from August until the rains begin again. Most of the planting takes place in the first half of the wet season, and the harvest comes after the rains have ceased. There is very little fishing, but antelopes, leopards, wild pig, and buck are hunted for their meat, and lions, leopards, hyenas, and monkeys on account of the damage they do to crops and livestock. The greater part of the region is free enough from tsetse fly to permit cattle-keeping, and for the tribe as a whole there is approximately one head of cattle to every two people. Pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens are also kept.

The material culture of the tribe is similar to that of their neighbours. They live in one- or two-roomed huts of bamboo or pole and mud; some women make pottery and some men make reed mats; all buy their clothes and their hoes from the shops.[2]

Three languages are used in the region: Ci-Ngoni, a language akin to Zulu, is now heard only in songs and royal praises; Ci-Nyanja is taught in the schools and is used for communication with Europeans and Indians; while the normal language used every day in the villages is a dialect of Ci-Nsenga.

I. THE STATE

Old Administrative System

The Ngoni think of themselves as different from their neighbours because of their chieftainship. The other tribes do not, in the eyes of the Ngoni, possess the same kind of pyramidal and centralized organization which was characteristic of the régime of Mpezeni I and which persists in a modified form at the present time.

The important positions in the old political structure were occupied by members of the royal lineage, their queens, the regional governors,[3] and the lieutenants.[4] The political system was at the same time the territorial system, residence being determined by political allegiance. The pattern of residence and allegiance persisted despite the movement of the tribe as a whole from one region to another and despite

[1] Trapnell, *Ecological Survey*, pp. 2–3.
[2] See my *Material Culture of the Fort Jameson Ngoni*.
[3] *Mukumnumu*, pl. *akumnumu*.
[4] *Ndunu*, pl. *ndunu*.

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the absence of any definite internal land boundaries between the territories of one political segment and another. The constant elements were the residential groups that we now know as villages,[1] and we may liken them to ships of different sizes and importance that preserve a loose formation while the fleet sails from place to place. Villages, discrete clusters of dwellings in comparative proximity and separated from one another by uninhabited stretches of garden-land and bush, were internally divided into divisions,[2] and from time to time these divisions broke away from one another or from their parent village to form new villages of their own. This process of divisional fission was characteristic of the commoner villages. Royal villages were usually formed by a parallel process by which an important member of the royal lineage established a new village for one or more of his queens by recruitment from his own natal village. The eldest son by the senior queen in that village then became the head of the segment of the royal lineage associated with the village. Thus the segmentation of the royal lineage was reflected in a proliferation of royal villages.

In the period immediately prior to the conquest of the tribe by British forces in 1898, there were four important royal villages, with populations of probably several thousands each. One belonged to a brother of Mpezeni, and the other three were controlled by groups of Mpezeni's own queens and their sons. Associated with each royal village were several regional governors, each of whom was responsible for the well-being of a group of lesser villages, and who resided among them in a village of his own. These lesser villages were commoner villages, each under its own headman. Each large royal village had also a number of lesser royal villages attached to it, and also many commoner villages were attached to a royal village of some sort directly, and not through a regional governor.[3]

Each important person, chief, member of the royal lineage, regional governor, or headman was assisted by a number of lieutenants, trusted subordinates who were usually not patrilineal kinsmen of their principal but who were sometimes related affinally. These lieutenants were ranked in order of the creation of their posts by their principal and assisted him in the control of his unit of administration. In the case of Mpezeni himself, however, there were two kinds of lieutenants. Those people known as the lieutenants of Mpezeni were

[1] *Mzumi*, pl. *mizumi*.
[2] *Cigawo*, pl. *vigawo*.
[3] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66, for a similar system among the Swazi.

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64 charged by him with specific functions relating to the State as a whole, and appear to have exercised general jurisdiction. Other lieutenants were known as the lieutenants of such-and-such a royal village, and were appointed by Mpezeni to look after the queens of the village and to be responsible for the internal ordering of the village.

In addition to these lieutenants each important person had a deputy,[1] who was a patrilineal kinsman of the same generation. Each new holder of the principal office selected his own deputy. The deputy's task was to act for his principal in his absence and to serve as an intermediary between the principal and his lieutenants.

[611] [558] All these posts were hereditary in the agnatic line, except for that of deputy, but new posts were continually being created and the holders of other posts fell into disgrace. Some of the lieutenants of Mpezeni were also headmen of their own villages, while other lieutenants were promoted to be regional governors.

631 178 161 Increase in population led to increase in the number of villages and of recognizable divisions within villages, both by divisional fission and by the setting up of separate establishments for groups of wives. This process, operating in response to population pressure from below, was assisted from above by the need to give newly created lieutenants and governors their own dependants and their own recognizable residential cluster.

631 641 The relative position and importance of a segment of the political structure might alter if its leader was killed in battle or if he offended the Paramount. For example, a certain lieutenant who had a village of his own committed adultery with one of Mpezeni's queens. He was [684] put to death, and all his followers were made to come and live in a 641 royal village. But in addition to the natural increase in the population 727 of any segment, new members were added by capture in war. There 563 was never any distinct class of slaves or captives in the Ngoni State. [567] Apart from the aristocratic families which traced their history back to the pre-migration period in Natal, the rest of the tribe had been either captured at one time or other on the way north, or had joined the Ngoni of their own volition. On capture, people were assigned to some or other important person, and after a while acquired a certain 563 autonomy of their own. The men were all enrolled into the age-set 641 regiment appropriate to their age, and it was possible for them to rise 701 to high positions in the State. No distinction of ethnic origin was

[1] *Mnewa*, pl. *anewa*. Cf. the Zulu term *umnawa*, younger brother who is next to the heir.

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made in the regimental system, which was organized on a national basis. A person of low ethnic status, that is, of comparatively late incorporation into the tribe but of senior regiment, was considered to be, in most circumstances, as good as a man of more aristocratic family but of a junior regiment. New regiments were formed about every four years.

Development of Minor Chieftainships

The defeat of the Ngoni army at the hands of the British in 1898 and the subsequent establishment of British control led to the partial breakdown of this system. The population was dispersed by the fighting and by the unsettled conditions that followed, and part of the kingdom was cleared for European occupation. The Administration recognized the grandson of Mpezeni I as the chief of the tribe, and also worked through a number of men known as Divisional Headmen, who were made responsible for small areas. Some of these divisional headmen were regional governors, some lieutenants of Mpezeni, some members of the royal lineage, and others were upstarts. It is not clear from the rather meagre records that remain or from the statements of informants exactly what happened between 1898 and 1914, but we know that by the latter date the Administration had come to recognize six men as local chiefs, apart from Mpezeni, and that four of them were said to be sons of Mpezeni I.[1] In 1929, when the term Native Authority was introduced, nine minor chiefs were appointed, of whom four were descended from Mpezeni I and one from the father of Mpezeni I. Two of the other minor chiefs have the descent-name *jere* that belongs to the royal lineage, and may be regarded as belonging to assimilated lineages. One is descended from a regional governor, the other from a policeman. Two minor chiefs do not have this descent-name, one being descended from a lieutenant of Zwangendaba and the other from a regional governor. This arrangement of one Paramount Chief and nine minor chiefs persists to the present day. With each of the ten chiefs is associated a more or less defined area within which most of the villages are said to belong to the chief of the area. What appears to have happened during the thirty years after the conquest is that the central power declined and that certain political and territorial segments achieved a degree of autonomy. The ten areas belonging to the different chiefs, which I shall refer to as counties, represent

[1] Cookend, *Native Tribes*, pp. 22 and 24.

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ten units of different orders of segmentation in the old system and are now regarded as ten homologous territorial segments in the new. Thus one village founded for a group of queens by Mpezeni I has given rise to two royal chieftainships, another to one royal chieftainship, and a third to a royal chieftainship and a non-royal one. On the other hand, there is no chieftainship corresponding to the son of Mpezeni I who was next in succession to the main heir.

There are royal villages in every county. The oldest royal village in a county is now the capital of the county, and the lieutenants in the capital are responsible to the county chief. The minor chiefs have continued the process of making new villages for their queens, so that in each county the chief lives in a recently formed royal village, founded either by himself or by his father, and not in his capital. The capital is often the biggest village in the county, while the chief's village is more frequently quite small. It is the name of the capital village rather than that of the chief's village that serves as the name of the county itself. Thus, while in the old days the national capital changed with each new Paramount, the county capitals do not alter. The new royal villages founded since 1898 have not the same importance in the political structure as had the pre-conquest royal villages. This change is reflected in the fact that there is now no real national capital in the old sense.

Disputes in the old days were settled in the village by the headman, or were taken to the regional governor, or to the lieutenants of the royal village, for settlement. If the matter could not be settled there it was taken to the assembly of the senior lieutenants of Mpezeni, whose decision could be set aside only by Mpezeni himself. Now each chief has a court, and there is an appeal court on which representatives from each of the ten counties sit in turn. In the old days important decisions were taken by the senior lieutenants, in consultation with Mpezeni, although the four large royal villages were to some extent independent of one another. Sections of the army, for instance, appear to have been sent out on raids from a royal village without reference to the Paramount.[1] Under the present régime meetings of the tribe as a whole are held at Mcumo, a centre established by the Administration at which there is a school and a dispensary. These are attended by the chiefs and such people as choose to come. These meetings are usually sponsored by the Administration, and meetings to discuss affairs that arise independently of the Administration are

[1] Cf. Gouthe, *A Trip to Mpezeni's*, p. 1.

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sometimes held at the Paramount Chief's village. Each minor chief holds meetings for the people in his own county to discuss matters of common interest. 647

Quarrels among the chiefs are mainly in terms of the traditional norms rather than of the new differentiation between them in the Native Authority system. The Paramount Chief may abuse the minor chiefs for not coming to visit him on his return from a journey, or for not bringing beer with them when they come to visit him. In each county there are villages which claim to belong to the chief of some other county, on the ground that they originated from the capital village of that county. These interloping villages increase the pressure on the land of the county in which they are, and friction between the two chiefs concerned may ensue. The chiefs like to be able to offer new land for gardens to the people of their own villages, yet at the same time each chief likes to have as many villages as possible apparently under his sway. Hence there is competition both for the allegiance of the villagers as well as for the land that they occupy. These struggles may be resolved by the Paramount Chief or by the Administration with a redefinition of boundaries or by moving the interloping villages to some other region. The Administration has from time to time placed one county under the tutelage of the chief of another, on grounds of administrative efficiency or the inexperience of a young chief. These moves are interpreted as attempts by one chief to incorporate the county of the other into his own, and allegations of killing by sorcery may be made against one minor chief on the death of another. Attempts have also been made to usurp the paramountcy, but this cannot be done openly under the present régime. 628 [643] [648] [692] [669]

Efforts are also made by members of the royal lineage to achieve the creation of new chieftainships by asserting the traditional autonomy of the rural districts into which the counties are divided for certain purposes. Seen in relation to the old system, these attempts are efforts to increase the segmentation in that branch of the royal lineage which corresponds with the modern county in which they live. It is unlikely that such attempts will be successful, as the policy of the Administration is opposed to the creation of new chieftainships. 631 64

Sanctions

The principal check on the power of the minor chiefs is that exercised through the Paramount. The Administration, which is always 687 648

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233 are out at pasture all day under the charge of herdboys, and may be brought in for milking in the early afternoon, later returning to the bush. Alternatively they are not milked until they come in just before sunset to be put in their byres for the night. These activities are
857 organized by the herdboys, who range from five up to about twelve
233 years in age. All the boys in a village take part in herding, whether or not their parents own cattle. A man keeps all his cattle in the village in one byre, although he may also have cattle in other villages under the care of relatives. The boys attach themselves to definite byres, and the senior boy of the group becomes responsible for all the cattle in the byre. He sees that the cattle do not stray into gardens during the season when they may damage the crops, and he checks that all the
[868] cattle return at night. He instructs the younger boys in the art of milking, and supervises the allocation of the milk, which is his perquisite. Cattle from all the byres in the village may be herded together. After the harvest the cattle are often left to wander where they please and the boys occupy themselves in the village or hunting for rabbits until it is time to round up the cattle for milking.

628 There are no definite pastures associated with one village rather
233 than with another, so that the herds from one village may come into
857 contact with those from another. This may lead to fighting between
[541] the two groups of herdboys, and also, if it can be managed, between the bulls of the villages. Boys take pride in the fighting ability of their bulls, and sometimes seek out other herds in order to demonstrate the superior strength of themselves and their animals. It is significant that informants referred always to fights between bulls of different villages, and not of fights between bulls from different byres in the same village, although these do occur.

233 In the past, herding was carried out by older boys, and life as a herd-
833 boy was terminated only by enrolment into a regiment. Inter-village
857 fighting went on partly to demonstrate that the boys concerned were now strong enough to join the army. At the present time boys of twelve and younger are employed on tobacco farms, and many attend school. Some cattle owners have to pay boys to come from other villages to herd their cattle as there are no boys available in the village itself, while others obtain the services of young girls.

Inter-village Relationships

628 Villages are grouped together into counties, under a minor chief,
631 and in some counties there are recognized subdivisions that I shall

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call rural districts. By virtue of their membership of rural districts and counties, villages have certain formal relationships with each other which we may regard as mainly political, and which we have discussed in connexion with the organization of the state. But there are other inter-village activities that are not related directly to the tribal political structure. These include hunting, dancing, drinking, trading, and some co-operative economic activities.

Hunting takes place for the most part in the dry season, but hunts may be organized at any time to deal with predatory animals which are causing damage to crops and livestock. Only men and boys hunt. Any man who chooses can organize a hunt, but it is usually a man of middle age with some experience and of some standing in his village who sends out word to the neighbouring villages that he proposes to hunt in such-and-such an area on such-and-such a day. The organizer is referred to as the owner of the hunt, and he is in tactical command. He nominates two men to be in charge of the two wings of the hunt, and himself stays in the middle of the single line abreast in which the hunters arrange themselves. Instructions are shouted from the centre and passed out to the wings. Any animals seen are attacked with knobkerries, spears, dogs, and, if there are any, guns. The owner of the hunt has no special privileges over the animals killed, which are divided between the men who actually kill them and the people who carry them back from the hunt to the village. Attendance at such hunts is not enforced, and if the chase is unsuccessful, people tend to drop out half-way. In the main, people distribute themselves along the line of the hunt in village groups, and the leaders of the wings usually bring with them a large band of hunters from their own villages. There are usually about sixty people on a hunt, coming from perhaps ten different villages.

Dancing is an activity that brings people together from many villages. Although girls, and sometimes boys, hold dances in their own villages in the evenings, these dances are thought of as practices rather than as proper dances. The latter take place in connexion with ceremonies of various kinds, and indeed wherever there is beer to drink there is the probability of some sort of dancing. Dances are also held for their own sake, without reference to other forms of social activity. Of these, two are important in promoting inter-village ties. The first, *ngoma*,[1] the most formal of all dances, was danced by regiments in the days when the regimental system was still operative, but

[1] Cf. the Zulu dance *ingoma*, and Read, *Tradition and Prestige*, p. 52.

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al-
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the 131
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now 602
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 624
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a